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POEMS
AND SKETCHES
OF NEBRASKA-

ADDISON LEWIS



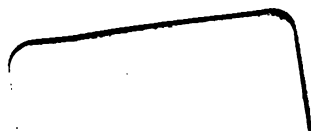


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Poems and Sketches

OF

Nebraska

BY

ADDISON ERWIN SHELDON

WITH 64 ILLUSTRATIONS

Lincoln, Nebraska:
State Journal Company
1908

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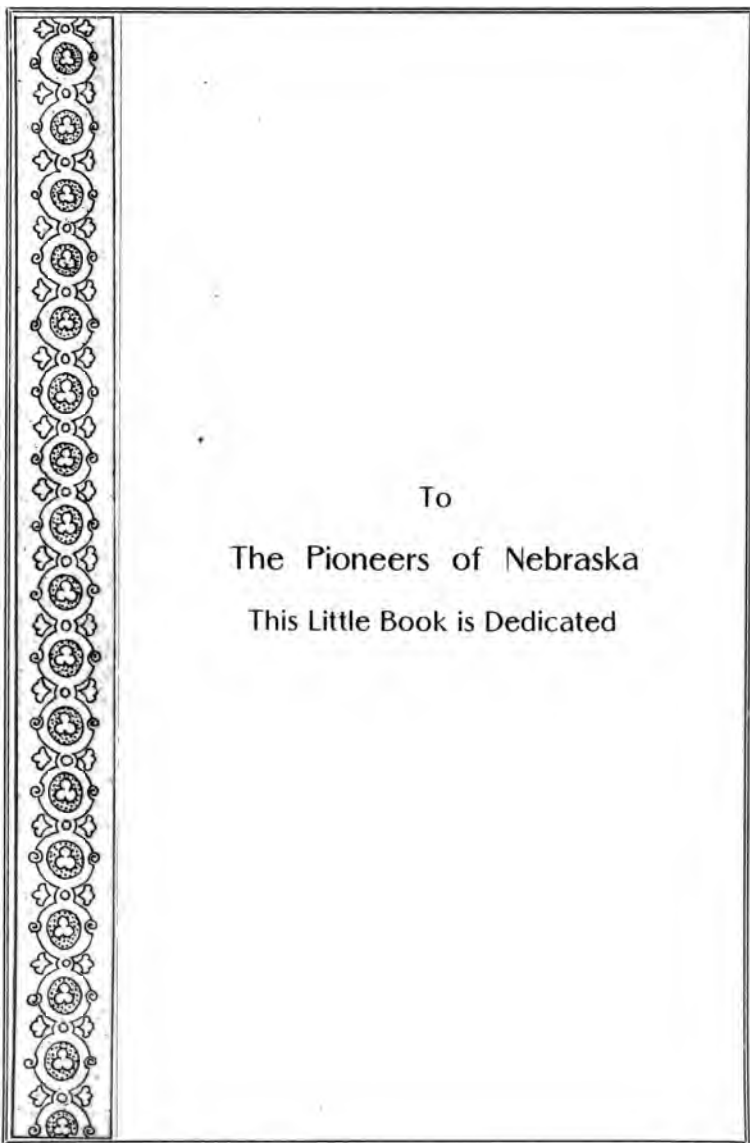


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To
The Pioneers of Nebraska
This Little Book is Dedicated



Pictured Rocks and Missouri River, Omana Reservation



PREFACE

Forty years,—almost,—of life therein have made Nebraska dear to me. From early boyhood to middle years her prairies, plains, lakes and streams, her hills and canyons, buttes and badlands, have been my constant and loving companions. Her people have been my people,—Pawnee, Sioux, Omaha, Otoe, Ponca;—the diggers of dugouts in early days; the dwellers in white topped wagons who slept and ate on mother earth; the isolated ranchers and cowboys; the freighters who hauled civilization to her most distant settlements; the homesteaders,—from whatsoever land—Iowa, Missouri, Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, New York, New England,—German, Pole, Irish, English, Swede, Dane, Russian, Bohemian.

Central in the great American plain between the Gulf and Hudson Bay, parted by the broad Platte Valley, natural roadway between the East and the West, Nebraska is the heart of the continent, the pathway of Empire. Life within her limits has been always strongly characterized—the type of its class. The monsters of the Cretaceous age lived here in greatest host and

PREFACE

left their bones as witness to the fact. The plains' Indian here attained his greatest perfection,—Pawnee in culture, Sioux and Cheyenne in war. The mountains and the Mississippi Valley meet within her borders and greater variety of fauna and flora flourish here than in other states.

Two great migrations peopled Nebraska with whites. The first,—at the close of the Civil War, reaching into the seventies,—filled the valleys and prairies of the southeast and central sections. The second,—in the later eighties,—crossed the sand hill belt and planted the settler's cabin and sod house on the remotest peak of the Pine Ridge in the northwest and the furthest canyon's edge in the southwest. Boyhood found me in the midst of the first migration; early manhood was borne along to the farthest frontier by the second.

The scenes and incidents of early settlement have a charm for all the generations which come after. The conquest of a new land from wild animals, wild plants and wild men is full of human action, of hardship, of sacrifice, of heroic deeds. Nebraska life is filled with these. The material for a new literature is here. A new literature will spring from its inspiration. There must be the beginnings,—this book among them.



PREFACE

Many of these poems and sketches were written in the hurry of country newspaper life,—some of them composed with printer's stick in hand while the press waited for the form. Not always the sentiment expressed is the sentiment held now, but always it is a sentiment which lived on these plains.

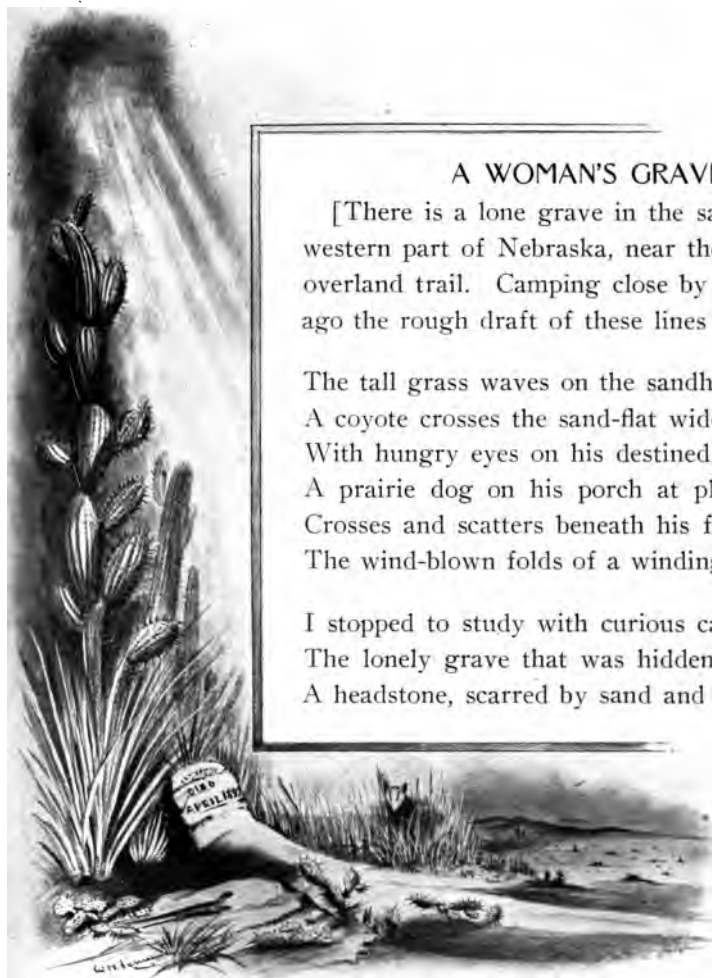
Personalities are in these poems—none of them unkindly meant, either when written or now. It has been found impossible to print significant things in Nebraska life without the names which belong to the events.

Most of the illustrations are made from the author's camera, two or three from that of Dr. E. H. Barbour and Dr. G. E. Condra. Seven years service in field work for the Nebraska State Historical Society has resulted in some fifteen hundred negatives from which selection has been made. Those who have made original drawings for the book are Mr. W. H. Farnam, Mr. Ned Hadley, Miss Bernice Branson and Ruth Sheldon. Each of them has been most helpful and sympathetic in the creation of this little volume. Into it, from all who have had aught to do with it, goes the spirit of the German poet, Baumbach:

"Mein Thüringen, aus dem ich schied,
Dir klingt mein Sang, Dich grüsst mein Lied."

ADDISON E. SHELDON.

Historical Society Rooms, September 19, 1907.



A WOMAN'S GRAVE

[There is a lone grave in the sandhills in the western part of Nebraska, near the route of the overland trail. Camping close by it some years ago the rough draft of these lines was written.]

The tall grass waves on the sandhill's side—
A coyote crosses the sand-flat wide
With hungry eyes on his destined prey—
A prairie dog on his porch at play—
Crosses and scatters beneath his feet
The wind-blown folds of a winding sheet.

I stopped to study with curious care
The lonely grave that was hidden there;
A headstone, scarred by sand and flame,

A WOMAN'S GRAVE

Still recorded a woman's name
And the legend carved in rude design—
"Died, April, 1849,
"Aged five and twenty years;
"To the Mount of Life from the plains of tears."

Was she a wife? It does not tell,
A mother? Perhaps. We know as well,
For on the gravestone above the mould
Simply a woman's name is told.
—A woman's name, but let it rest—
Why should it be here exprest?
Let the desert claim her for his bride,
Sleeping softly upon his side.

Long I paused in the evening dim
And gazed at the headstone black and dim—
Black with the fires of many a year,
Sweeping the sandhills far and near,
The coyote's cry came thro' the shades,
A lizard troubled the spear grass blades,
And a light gray cloud passed overhead,
Dropping a tear—for it knew the dead.

I mused and wondered the more I thought—
Who she was who lay in that lonely spot.
Was she slender and fair to view
With a soul to dare and a hand to do?

A WOMAN'S GRAVE

A hero's heart in her woman's breast
Beating with passion to know the West,
Yet soothing with ways that never fail
The long, wild leagues of the Overland Trail?
With a woman's vision of faith and hope
Viewing the mountains' western slope—
Till the setting sun on the western sea
Beckoned her on to its mystery?

The cactus grows on the drifting mound;
The wolf and the sandstorm scar the ground;
The wolf and the wind may wail and sweep
Above the bed where she lies asleep—
Not the wind nor the wolf shall disturb the rest
Of the woman hero who loved the West.







TANGLE HAIR'S RAID

One April morning old Tangle Hair
Rose up a rebel to Pine Ridge fare:
He wanted flour that had tasted wheat,
Cattle whose bones had the smell of meat;—
Coffee and sugar were mighty rare
About the tepee of Tangle Hair;
The grass was short and the ponies tlin,
But hunger tugged at his tepee pin:
He looked at his squaw and his dark pappoose,
Thought of his days when free and loose,
Of the gristly stock in the grim stockade—
Saddled and started on Tangle Hair's Raid.

Ah! sweet are the April gales that blow
On Beaver Valley and fair Bordeaux,
The air was soft as a maiden's cheek,
The curlew whistled his warning shriek,
The magpie chattered, the robin sung,—
Nature and Tangle Hair were young.
Again with his primitive bow and spear
He lurked on the path of the black-tailed deer;
Again, as in youth, his eye dilates
At the lofty pass of Sheridan's Gates.



Fort Robinson, Nebraska, looking toward the Pine Ridge.

TANGLE HAIR'S RAID

Never a furrow of sod was broke,
Vanished the white man's hateful smoke;
The thick grown grass in the buffalo's trail
Seemed to wither and then to fail:
Forgot was hunger and misery—
Tangle Hair's band again was free.

There was consternation in Washington,
Flash! on the wire to Ft. Robinson:
"Commanding officers, beware
Of the murderous red-skin, Tangle Hair;
Fasten your barracks every night,
Load your guns and put out your light;
Clip the heads of the garrison bare
To save their scalps from Tangle Hair."
Back on the wire to Washington:
"Every soldier has his gun,
Officers sleeping on their arms—
Ready to run at the first alarms.
Rumors come floating through the air
Of settlers butchered by Tangle Hair;
Our blood is up and our spirits keen—
To shed the last drop in the Post Canteen."

Into the fort with his queer command
Rode Tangle Hair and his tattered band.
The wagon axles made doleful shriek,
Pinched was each squaw and pappoose cheek,

TANGLE HAIR'S RAID

Sore and blistered the ponies' backs,
The gaunt-ribbed dogs lolled in their tracks,—
The Cheyenne raiders, the fierce outlaws,
Were crying children and hungry squaws.

Hark to the bugle! The Black Brigade
Is marching in on the Chadron grade,—
Every trooper an ace of spades.
"Column right!" the captain said,—
The red men followed, the black files led;
Curious sight, when the Cheyenne braves
March 'neath the guns of the sons of slaves,—
Watching that ragged Cheyenne band,
Watching that stately black command,
My thoughts went out in the years to be
When red and black men shall both be free.
I saw in the stormy days now past
The black man bent to his wageless task;
I looked and saw his slavery end
On Wagner's ramparts, at Milliken's Bend;—
Better the liberty bought with blood
Than starve on one's native plains for food;—
And somehow I saw in that cavalcade
A plea for justice, a cry for aid,
And looking beyond the doubt and dust
Into the future with hope and trust,
I read in the skies of promise there
An end of raiding for Tangle Hair.





TO THE WOOD THRUSH

Where the deep shadows of the darkest wood
Sleep in the silence of noonday solitude,
There from the depths, where other tongues are
 mute,
Floats the liquid passion of a golden flute :

Oh spirit-voice of the woodland,
Oh mellow crescendo trill,—
Oh shy, sweet, unseen singer,—
My heart is answering still.

Santee Mission, July 24, 1904.

"WHY DON'T CHRISTMAS STAY?"



"WHY DON'T CHRISTMAS STAY?"

"Mamma, why don't Christmas stay?"
Asked a childish flaxen head,—
While undressing for the bed;
Teasing tales of Christmas lore
From his mother's ample store—
Suddenly he questioned, "Say,"
'Mamma, why don't Christmas stay?"

"If I was God, mamma dear,
I'd have Christmas all the year,
All the summers and the springs
We'd be giving Christmas things,
Everybody feeling good
Just as if they understood
Every day was Christmas day.
—Tell me, why can't Christmas stay?"

"WHY DON'T CHRISTMAS STAY?"

Why not, why not—let them tell
O'er whose heads the Christmas bell,
On whose brow the Christmas snow
Sprinkled forty years ago;
On whose heart and in whose mind
Are the burdens of mankind,
For the coming long delayed,
Of the Christmas King have prayed;
Let them answer, best they may
"Mamma, why don't Christmas stay?"

Ye, who for the rights of men
Faced the lions in their den;
Who to worship Father's God
Through the wilderness have trod,
Who in every clime and age
Tasted persecution's rage,
Who your open bosoms set
'Gainst the shot and bayonet,
And for an enslaved race
Dwelt with death in prison place
Tell the child, nor say him nay—
"Why don't Christmas always stay?"

Ye who on the mountain height
Look toward the dawning light,
Strong in heart and pure in lips
Open your Apocalypse,

"WHY DON'T CHRISTMAS STAY?"

Write the new Apostles' Creed
In the words that children need,
Read the riddle children say,—
"Mamma, why don't Christmas stay?"

"When in childlike faith and trust,
"Love is lifted from the dust,
"When in little daily deeds
"We shall write our only creeds,
"When as in Judean skies
"Truth transfigured shall arise,
"When the brotherhood of men
"Shall in Christ be born again—
"Mothers shall to children say
"Christmas time has come to stay."

Slumber on, Oh! flaxen head,
Sleeping in your trundle bed,
From your dreams I still shall hear
"I'd have Christmas all the year,
"All the summers and the springs
"Still be giving Christmas things."
Every heart shall better be
For the dream that's dreamed by thee
Till in waking thou shalt say,—
"Christmas time has come to stay."



"SALT CREEK IS RIZ"

"SALT CREEK IS RIZ"

"Salt Creek is riz"—

Burst on us like a bomb,—

"Riz an' a bilin' fer Kingdom Come,—

Thar aint no time fer parley nor excuse—

Ketch up yer cattle an' fer God's sake cut
loose,"

—Rider and pony vanished in rainy dark

Firing their mud-splashed volley at its mark:—

"Salt Creek is riz."

"Salt Creek is riz."

How thro' the depths and drouths of time

Rises again that summer of '69,—

Thirty-eight years ago this wet July,—

Camped on the plashy bank of Salt Creek, high

Above the swollen, saline stream below,—

Above, we thought, the highest overflow;

Turned loose the cattle (watered at Yankee
Hill)

To wander, yoked together, at their will;

Swung from beneath the hounds the bag of
chips and bark,—

Bunched heads about the match's flickering
spark,

With bated breath saw in its flame appear

Promise of coffee hot, sowbosom crisp and dear;

In the soft twilight of a drizzling rain



High Water, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1902.

"SALT CREEK IS RIZ"

Saw the white caravans filling the salty plain,—
From Haines' Branch 'round to the mouth of
Oak

Campfire to campfire thro' the darkness spoke;—
Far-off the bull-whip with its pistol crack
Circled above some luckless longhorn's back,—
The wagonmaster's short and sharp command
With a babe's wailing floated hand in hand
Across the plain. Some woman with her brood
Sang songs of homeland,—for interlude
The herder's night-call "Coo-ee, Coo-ee"—the
steady drip

Of falling raindrops on the sputtering chip.
In the gray darkness on the distant slope
Swift-fleeting shadows—wolf or antelope.

Oh! far, familiar frontier scene and song!
How the boy's heart in answer full and strong
Beats in the man's bosom—till the quickened
blood
Throbs thro' its channels like a Salt Creek
flood,
Drowning with waves of joy each half-forgotten
pain
Buried in dust and debris on life's arid plain.

What wonder tale that day for boyish eyes,—
The folded prairie's Book of Paradise,—

"SALT CREEK IS RIZ"

Opening its volume, glorious page on page,
Of sod unbroken since the ice-plow's age
With promise brave of better tales untold
Beyond the sunflower skyline edge of gold.

Quaint scenes upon the old Steam Wagon
Road—

Bull whackers' caustic comment on their load,—
Rude jokes and salutations, ruder pranks,
Shot, like Sioux arrows, from their passing
ranks,

Yet, somehow, in the roughest jibe and jest
Warm hearted comradeship its soul exprest.
These memories linger in the fading glow
Of the old camp fires many years ago.

"Salt Creek is riz—"

The time to dream was o'er,
The rush of rising waters grew a roar;
Each ravine torrent tumbling in its flow
From head of Haines' Branch to Saltillo.
No bridges barred the waters' swift accord,
The only crossing then the open ford;
No mellowed plow fields then, of waving grain,
Sucked up in spongy soil the sheeted rain,—
The moving clouds falling on far divide
Mingled themselves at night with Salt Creek
tide,

"SALT CREEK IS RIZ"

And fierce and swift the spreading waterspout
Far o'er the plain put every campfire out.

What splashing thro' the darkness after stock,
What stumbling in some hidden hole's rude
shock—

In search for hillside safety—at daybreak
Salt Basin lay below us as a lake,
With half-drowned campers perched on every
slope
From Middle Creek around to Antelope.

On the boy's memory, sharp and clear
Stamped deep the comment of one pioneer:
"I wonder 'f what the feller said wuz true—
'It never rains on Salt Crik er the Blue.'"





Salt Creek Flood, 1902.



LEWIS AND CLARK CENTENNIAL

A hundred years ago a rude sail tent was set
By the Missouri's flood—far frontier, wild
and rough—

Beneath its shade the white and red man met,
Struck hands, smoked pipe—and named it
Council Bluff.

The curious catbird's querulous question note
Challenged the invaders of his solitude;
The warning from the wildwood warbler's
throat

Hushed the harsh clamor of her startled brood.

Beneath the bluff the river beat its breast,
Mad that its mystery should so soon be told;
Beyond—the boundless prairie stretching west
Mimicked the August sun with disks of gold.

LEWIS AND CLARK CENTENNIAL

And over all—the earth, the sky, the stream—
 Bloomed the first blush—the new-born infant
 smile—

Fond nature, waking from some tender dream,
 To meet her coming master wore the while.

Those distant decades—like a vesper bell
 Their sweet, far echoes haunt the place and
 hour;

The boatman with his torrent-tossed cordelle—
 The red man with the prairie for his dower.

Still other echoes answer thro' the years—
 The song of bugles morning, night and noon—
And in the closer twilight shade appears
 Fort Atkinson and later Fort Calhoun.

The march of hungry millions farther west—
 The wagon train—the locomotive shriek—
The city's surging with its strange unrest—
 The triumph of the strong above the weak.

One question in it all—in calumet smoke,
 In bird and bugle note—in prairie sod;
In city's tumult; in the piston stroke;
 The question of man's destiny and God.

And, met today upon historic ground,
 To mark the memory of this hallowed spot—
Shall we find in each other's eyes around
 The answer,—for a hundred years forgot?

August 3, 1904.



Unveiling Lewis and Clark Boulder at Ft. Calhoun, August 3, 1904.

THE PICTURED ROCKS OF BLACKBIRD HILL

The Pictured Rocks of Blackbird Hill,—
What legends wait the savant's skill;
Who can those curious carvings trace,
Cut in the sandstone's somber face;
Thick grown with moss and lichens gray,
In dells shut from the light of day;—
What may these ancient writings mean
Deep hid in Blackbird's dark ravine?



This glowing sun,—this evening star—
Tell an old myth of Pawnee lore,—
Primeval nuptials,—whence there sprung
The tribal race and tribal tongue.

Behold near by in pictured word
The Hunter-Elk and Thunder-Bird;—

THE PICTURED ROCKS OF BLACKBIRD HILL



Tales that are told as far and wide
As Chesapeake and Puget tide.



These rough-hewn ribs and bison face
Make for the Buffalo-Man a place;—
A favorite story—circled round—
On many an Indian camping ground.

THE PICTURED ROCKS OF BLACKBIRD HILL



Is this the centaur of the Greeks
Which in a later carving speaks?
This blended quadruped and man,
Whence came the Indian artist's plan?

The Pictured Rocks of Blackbird Hill—
Let him who reads read what he will;—
The oldest Indian shakes his head—
“In the long, long ago—all dead.”



The "Little Rock," Omaha Reservation.

EASTER EGGS

EASTER EGGS

A REMINISCENCE.

Seems to me like yesterday :—
Walkin' down the beaten path,
Where the autumn aftermath
Glistened with the April wet,
Tryin' to look green and yet
Kind of limp and lonesome lay.

Gettin' long toward Easter time ;
Days the city folks calls Lent,—
Little that we cared or spent
What they called it, prose or rhyme,
More than twenty years ago,—
Me and my old playmate Joe ;
Back in dear old Yucatan
Township, where Root River ran,

What we cared fur was the wood
Filled with flowing maple sap,
And the bluff above the gap
Where the Mississippi's flood,—
Floating many a steamboat craft,
Many a Chippewa forest raft,—
Met our boyish gaze and curled
Round the bend into the world.

Then the mill-pond and the dam ;—
Spearing red horse in the race ;





Old Mill Dam at Sheldon, Minnesota.

EASTER EGGS

And below our swimming-place
Was a cave where Turkey Sam
Shot and killed a hungry bear—
Oftentimes we'd go and peer
In about the rocks and stones
Looking for dead Injuns' bones
While our hearts felt awful queer.

But about them Easter eggs—
We had fixed it—Joe and I,—
Talked it over on the sly,
Makin' tops and mumble-pegs;
Playin' marble and high spy;—
Next time Easter day come round
We would know where eggs was found;
Many a jocund, boyish boast,
'Bout the eggs we'd have to roast
Over in the poplar grove
Just this side of Knox's cove—
Then there'd be a big surprise:—
When we'd from our hidden store
Bring our Easter eggs galore
How the folks would bug their eyes!

I remember 'long in March,
Mild and early was the spring.
Say, how them old hens did sing!
How the folks for eggs would search.
Mother couldn't understand—

EASTER EGGS

Fed 'em table scraps and meat—
Combs was red and slick and neat,
Cackle, and they'd kick the sand
Through their feathers with their feet.

Joe and I—we understood,—
Playin' 'round the old barnyard,
Watched them old hens weasel hard
Tryin' to hide away and brood;
Every secret cleft and nook,—
Underneath the horses' stall,
High up on the smoke house wall,
Knewed 'em better than a book;—
Out beside the pile o' rails,
In the tool house by the nails,—
Where a hen could crawl or fly,
We went after,—Joe and I.

Then to make a hiding place,
In the corner of a stack,
Lay a weatherbeaten rack—
Crawled beneath it on our face
With a forked, crooked pole
Worked and twisted through the straw,
Roughest work I ever saw;
Made a long and narrow hole,
Then by twisting round and round,
Dug a nest close to the ground.

EASTER EGGS

In it went our Easter eggs :
Many a time I hurt my back
Skoochin' under that old rack,
Rusty nails would scratch my legs—
Still, as Easter time drew nigh,
Poked 'em in there on the sly :—
One thing troubled us—old Nig
Our old Spanish topknot hen,
Disappeared, we couldn't find,
Not a feather left behind
Just to show where she had been.

Last our Easter Sunday came—
Seems to me like yesterday,
In that old familiar path
With the autumn aftermath
Lying 'round like locks of hay :—
All the east was clouds of flame
Like that early Easter morn
When the Son, of woman born,
Rose and rolled the stone away.—
Bright and early did we creep
Underneath that beaten rack,
Scratched our legs and punched our back,
Reached in for them eggs, when "cheep,"
"Cheep, cheep, cheep" and "cluck, cluck, cluck"
And Joe says "Dog on our luck,
"Ef it haint that old black hen,

EASTER EGGS

"Ef she ain't a'gone and ben
"Just a settin' with her legs
"Straddled on our Easter eggs,
"An' what's more—it beats the dickens
"Half them Easter eggs is chickens."





POOR'S RANCH—NIOBRARA RIVER

These star-high canyon walls looks grim
I own,—till one gets wonted,—
The black pines rockin' on the rim
Like Indian ghosts enchanted:—
And yet there doesn't grow fer me
On mountain, plain or prairie
No spot so friendly and so free
As Poor's Ranch, Niobrara.

Lonesome? I reckon not,—y' see
There aint no lack o' rustle,—
The talkin' of the pines to me
Beats all Chicago's hustle,—
And ridin' out across the range
From March to Jenooary,—
There's nothin' lonesome-like or strange
Along the Niobrara.

Saddle and blanket comrades, they
Hev vanished from the border,—
More on the shoot than on the pray
An' yit fur law and order:—
The hoss thief trail from Long Pine Glen
They tracked to canyons scary,
Fur Middleton and Kid Wade men
Hid on the Niobrara.

POOR'S RANCH—NIOBRARA RIVER



You knew Tim Jones, of Bear Creek Ranch,—
What was his queer alias?—
He killed a preacher up the branch
Fer tryin' to make him pious:—
His Texas wife swooped down on Tim
A livin' here with Sarah,—
There wan't no use o' huntin' him
Next day on Niobrara.

Jim Murray then,—Jim Dahlman now,—
Who shared our bunk an' bacon,
Has quit a roundin' up the cow
And gone to pres'dent makin';



"Sail up the Bay with Bryan."

It makes the old gang chuckle when
They read of him a tryin'
To rope them Wall Street bulls an' then
Sail up the Bay with Bryan.
I wonder 'f when in politics
He minds that little flurry
We had at old White River Nick's
Beyond the Niobrara?

John Shore—who used to throw a calf
To beat all human natur'—
Threw the S-preme Court—an' don't laugh—
Down in the Legislatur';
Poor John! He's crossed the other side
Snake River sand hills dreary—
One good man more will never ride
Along the Niobrara.

That Gordon outfit Black Hills trail
Goes yonder gully—riggin'—
Black Hills or bust—they'd never fail
To reach the Deadwood diggin'—
But just beyond the Boilin' Springs—
The old U. S. *Calvary*
Bonfired their wagons, grub and things
Beside the Niobrara.

Bill Irwin an' the Stetter Boys,
Who kep' us all a guessin'

POOR'S RANCH—NIOBRARA RIVER

Which one could raise the roughest noise
To earn the outfit's blessin',—
Has quit the range an' settled down
As tame as a canary;—
You'd never b'lieve they'd shoot a town
Along the Niobrara.

What changes come—the Texas Trail—
Abilene!—An' Ogalalla!—
The dry drives, where the water'd fail,—
The quicksands where 'twas shallow;
The old North Platte hell-roarin' high,—
The longhorns' floatin' ferry—
And last,—the pines agin the sky
Upon the Niobrara.

The fur-off, early round-up day,
Where all was open ridin',—
No barb wire fences in the way—
No railroad cut or sidin'—
No land detective's sneakin' frills
A spottin' the unwary—
But jest the cattle an' the hills
An' rushin' Niobrara.

Old days is gone—the place seems dear—
The canyon an' the river;
Heaven aint no furdur off from here,—
An' I can't stay forever;
Like mirage lakes of alkali
I've seen above the prairie—
I'll look above when I shall die
For Poor's Ranch, Niobrara.

MAJOR FRANK NORTH



MAJOR FRANK NORTH

White Captain of red Pawnee bands;—

Chau-i, Kit-ke-hak, Pit-hau-erat, Skidi,—

Red rangers of white borderlands,

Grim guardians of Platte plains and sands:—

Chief of the scalp-locked Pan-i!

Where the Sioux trail led up the Loup,—

Marked by the settlers slain,—

Where rang the fierce Cheyenne war-whoop,—

Far on the Hat Creek plain;—

MAJOR FRANK NORTH

On the Lodge Pole or the Little Blue,—
Where was hot work at hand,—
At the skirmish front, with his warriors true,
Rode the White Chief with his Pawnee band.

Red men against the red—
But a white man in command!
Scalp for scalp the old feud fed,—
For the Sioux and the Pawnee border bled
Ere ever was seen a white man's head
In the fair Nebraska Land!

The Sioux and the Pawnee wars are o'er
And the border days are by;
The white man plows from hill to shore,—
His cornfields wave where the fight was sore;—
The White Chief rests forevermore—
In the land where he longed to lie.

FRANCOIS SALWAY



FRANCOIS SALWAY

Among the pine hills of the Sioux land,
Among the chiefs of the Corn Creek band,—
Brave and thoughtful and quiet alway
Lived the strong man, Francois Salway.

Sitting there at his cabin door
With his children three or four,
And his faithful, old-time squaw—
His by the Sioux and the Saxon law—
Often he talked as the sun sank low
Of the old trapping times of long ago.

FRANCOIS SALWAY

His father was a coureur des prairies,—
His mother was a woman of the Shoshoni.
From the South Pass to Montreal,
From Saint Louis to Old Fort Hall
By bateau, pony and on his back
He carried the bison and beaver pack.
Seven hundred pounds the boatmen say
He bore on his shoulders broad one day.
Once with his furs he swam alone
The foaming flood of the Yellowstone.

In his log cabin built by his own hand
Chief among chiefs of the Corn Creek band
Quiet and brave and thoughtful alway
Lived the strong man, Francois Salway.



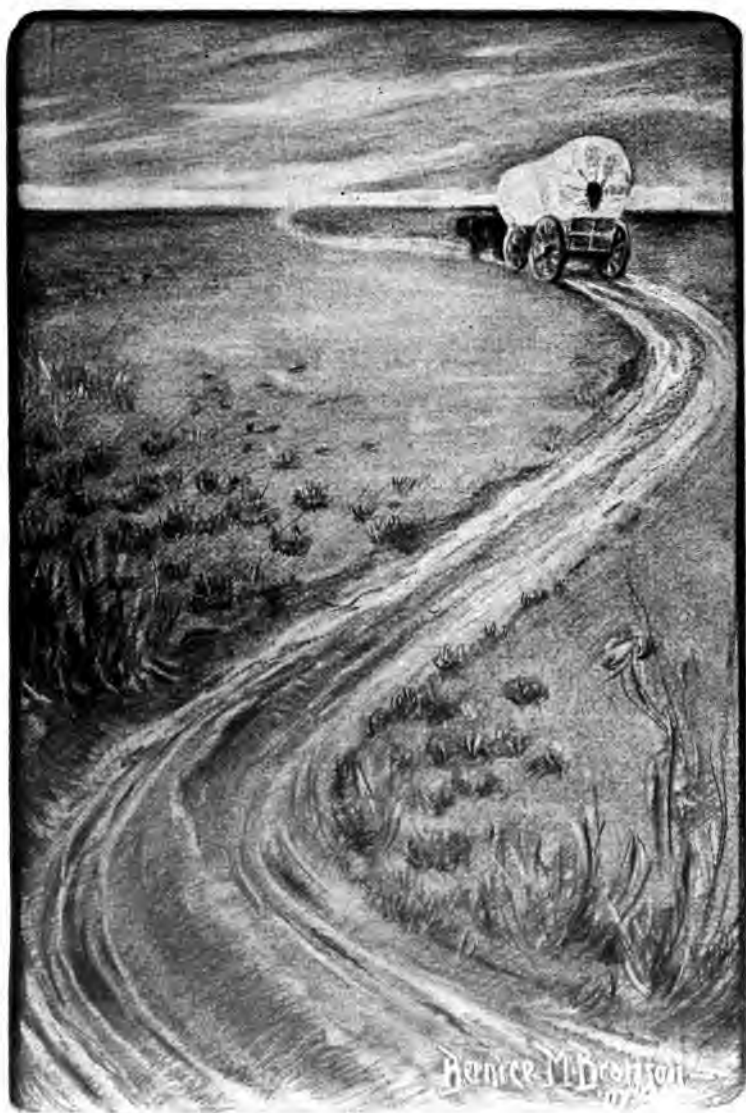
LITTLE WHITE RIVER CAMP

LITTLE WHITE RIVER CAMP

A thousand summer-flies, about our camp,
Swarmed in the sputtering smoke and evening
damp;

Horse-fly and gnat of all the biting breeds,—
Musca domestica, dragons on their steeds;
The light mosquito tuned his gay guitar,—
Ant hills took wing and joined the mimic war,—
A million moths whose birth that morning made
Wove in the camp-fire's flame their burning
braid;—

Vacation dream! this was in last July,—
Do summer fancies frost so soon and die?



Renee M. Brown

HOUSES IN BETWEEN

**BEFORE SO MANY PEOPLE BUILT THEIR
HOUSES IN BETWEEN**

There's nothin' like the neighbors that in early
days was seen
Before so many people built their houses in be-
tween;
Them days we use' to neighbor all along the
Denver road,—
Camden Forks to Martin's an' on to Kearney
Ford,—
Thompson's Ranch at Walnut Creek an' Mills-
paugh's futher on,
Fouse's an' McFadden's—an' another one that's
gone;
We went forty miles to funeral an' sixty to a
dance,—
An' everybody eager, like it was their only
chance,—
Shakin' hands an' swappin' news an' meetin'
heart to heart,
Before so many houses pushed us all so fur
apart.
The folks acrost the road is kind enough today,
But they're nothin' like the neighbors who lived
twenty miles away;
No! There's nothin' like the neighborin' the
early days has seen
Before so many people built their houses in be-
tween.

FAREWELL TO MY SHANTY

[No claim is laid to the authorship of this poem. It wandered away from the brain-coral of its composer during the drouth seasons of 1890-94 without a brand and was seized upon and reprinted, with numerous variations, by the frontier press of that time. The original was full of rough, stumbling lines. Some of these have been omitted, others revised. But the poem, with all its crudities, is one of the most faithful pictures of a certain period and social condition in all western literature. As such it finds a here.]

Farewell to my homestead sod shanty;
I have made my final proof;
The cattle will hook down the walls,
And someone will steal off the roof.

Farewell to my sheet-iron stove
That stands in the corner all cold;
The good things I baked in the oven
Can never in grammar be told.

Farewell to my cracker-box cupboard,
With a gunny-sack hung for a door;
Farewell my tin spoons and tin dishes
I never shall need any more.



FAREWELL TO MY SHANTY

Farewell to my 2x4 bedstead,—
Where after my labors I slept;
Farewell to the dreams that I dreamed there
While the centipedes over me crept.

Farewell to my down-holstered rocker
With the bottom sagged into the ground;
Farewell to the shirts, socks and breeches
That filled it again to the round.

Farewell to my sour dough pancakes
No one but myself could endure;
If they didn't taste good to the stranger
They were sure the dyspepsia to cure.

Farewell to my tea and my crackers;
Farewell to my water and soap;
Farewell to my sorghum and buckwheat,
Farewell to my lallacadope.

A final farewell to my homestead;—
Farewell to your hills and your sand;
I've covered you up with a mortgage—
Farewell to my quarter of land.

THANKSGIVING DAY



THANKSGIVING DAY

All hail the day so well begun
In sixteen hundred twenty-one,—
When on New England's iron coast
Our fathers thanked the Lord of Hosts

For watchful care ;—
That winter's famine that distrest
Gave place to summer days that blest
Their little wood-girt fields forlorn,—
The humble pumpkin and the corn,—
These filled the Indian summer's haze
With songs of peace, with words of praise
And earnest prayer.



"Along the rugged Pine Ridge crest."

THANKSGIVING DAY

They little dreamed beyond the wood,
Fencing their sea-girt solitude,
On highland prairies of the west,
Along the rugged Pine Ridge crest
 In thankful way;
Frontiering in Nebraska's storm,
With hearts as earnest and as warm,
Sons of the Pilgrim Fathers' stock
Would praise the Lord of Plymouth Rock—
And with them join New England's song
That mingled host, that refuged throng,
Fled from the Old World's tribute place,—
Celt, Saxon, Slav and Latin race,—
Partakers of their free estate
Two hundred seventy years from date
 Of their Thanksgiving Day.
November, 1891.



The Blue River above Crete, Nebraska.

THE SONG OF THE BLUE

I come from the plains where
The people are free;
The soft falling rains were
A father to me;
The prairie my mother,—
The fairest of earth,—
The west wind my brother
Who sang at my birth.

I come from the corn-land
Where the bread tree is grown;
I come from the morn-land
Where roses are blown;—
On the plains of the mountains
In the land of the west,—
By the Blue River fountains
The people shall rest.



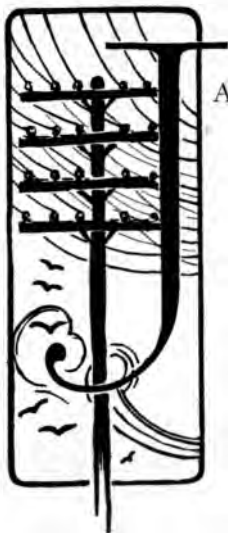
Falling Leaves on the Blue River.

THE SONG OF THE BLUE

I come in the spirit
That conquers the night,—
All men shall inherit
God's landscape and light;
I come with the warning
Again and again;—
Give the land and the morning
To children of men.

'Tis the secret my brother
Still tells to the plain;—
The legend my mother
Long learned from the rain;—
The song that my daughters
Bear down to the sea—
Wide spread as their waters
Its music shall be.

JAY GOULD IS DEAD



JAY GOULD is dead.
Along the wires the message
sped,
Across Nebraska's plains, the
Rockies' slope,—
From Denver down to Gau-
dalope;—
Amid the never ceasing din
Of clicking keys, the bulletin
Told its quick tale and scurried
on—
From Fundy's bay to Oregon—
"Jay Gould is dead."

"Jay Gould is dead—"
The weary operator raised his head
And whistled in a thoughtful way:
"Death gets us all at last—so good bye Jay"—
Drew a short sigh, but shed no tear
And wondered if his pay would rise next year;
And if the W. U. would ever recognize
The talent of a man about his size—
Now that Jay Gould was dead.



"The Weary Operator Raised his Head."

JAY GOULD IS DEAD

"Jay Gould is dead"—
On crowded change and bustling thoroughfare
Proclaim the fate of wizard millionaire:
Bold Speculation pauses while it bends—
To question the effect on dividends;
And Labor asks while leaning on its spade
"How many millions, Pat, that devil Jay has
made?"
And guessing at the numbers shakes its head,—
"It's just as well, perhaps, Jay Gould is dead."

"Jay Gould is dead"—
The farmer in his field
Reflects while plowing on the harvest yield,
And whether, when the wheat's again in shock,
It must pay dividends on watered stock,
Or he can pay his debts and get ahead—
Since old Jay Gould is dead.

"Jay Gould is dead—"
Shall no one shed a tear?
Go tell the railroad man, the clear-
Eyed switchman at his post, the engineer—
Missouri Pacific, Wabash or Sante Fé,—
And listen while he wipes the—dust—away;
"Jay Gould is gone, is he, well.
There's better men the Bible says in hell."

JAY GOULD IS DEAD

* * * * *

The man of master mind
Rolled up his millions, but forgot mankind—
And mankind struggling for its daily bread
Hears with no heartache that Jay Gould is dead.

A NEW BOSTON TEA PARTY

[Park Church Burying Ground is in a congested part of Boston and has been made a playground for children. A Nebraska visitor to the grave of Paul Revere found a little girls' tea party seated around a flat gravestone there as a tea table.]

Still making tea?—these more than hundred
years—

Since the tea party of historic date:
Boston defying commerce, king and fears
In her own harbor brewed her cup of fate.

Yet the tea party spirit lingers here,
When happy Boston children at their play
Make their tea-table tomb of Paul Revere,
Careless of Charlestown's ride or Concord's
fray.

Above, the leafy corridors of June,
Beneath, those ashes once a flaming spark,—
While fearless prattles Freedom's glad forenoon
Where Freedom's morning rose so red and
dark.

Ride on, oh restless soul of rider true,—
Rest on, oh ashes of the daring dead;—
This is the triumph Time hath given you
That Freedom's birds and children crown thy
head.





"Bright Eyes"—Mrs T. H. Tibbles and Family—Omaha Reservation, 1903.

BRIGHT EYES

A simple Omaha Indian maid,
Modest and shy, yet unafraid.
Who left her loved Nebraska plains
To walk the white man's path with pains,
And grew to earnest womanhood
With all the white man's lore endued.
In quick intelligence and grace
The woman leader of her race,
Living to move with step serene
In highest culture's fairest scene,
Yet never in that scene forgot
Her Indian home and tribal lot.
The Blackbird Hills to her were good,
The tepee and the earth lodge rude,
And busy years could not efface
Child memories of the buffalo chase.
To tell the legends of her tribe,
Fondly its feasts and faith describe
She loved, but in her heart more near
She held the Indian people dear.
The humble teacher of her race,
She lifted them to higher place;
She championed their sore distress
In crowded audience hall and press;
She crossed the sea to waken throngs
In Europe to the red man's wrongs;
She sleeps—her name, *Inshta Theumba*,
Lives ever with the Omaha.



THE EMPTY SLEEVE

1865.

The little toy-soldier neglected lay,
Although it was bright and new,
For the father-soldier came that day
Back from the ranks of blue;
Back from the banks of the Rapidan
And from Richmond's gates afar,
Back to the homestead fields again
And home from the fields of war.

He had marched away with the drum and fife
To make his country free;
He had left his arm where he risked his life—
In front of the guns of Lee.
Ah! little could know the baby brain
Or the baby heart conceive
Of the battle-shock or the prison-pain,
Or the weight of the empty sleeve.

But keen were the eyes of the baby boy
As with honest gaze and true
He looked with awe from the soldier-toy
To the soldier-man in blue.
And drawing nearer—he meant no harm—
But it hurt—as he peered to see
What had become of the good right arm
That was slain by the guns of Lee.

* * * * *

THE EMPTY SLEEVE

Turning gray is the soldier's hair,
His years are few to grieve
At hearts so cold that they do not care
For the ache in an empty sleeve.
His eyes are turned to the stars on high,
Those stars he loved to see
On his country's flag, when he dared to die
In front of the guns of Lee.



MY MOTHER-IN-LAW



MY MOTHER-IN-LAW

Last night as she took the Lincoln train
And her baggage on board I saw,

I know it is odd—but I felt a pain
To part with my mother-in-law!

A man's own mother of course is dear
And the child that lisps "Papa,"

But say—don't you think it a trifle queer
To love your mother-in-law?

MY MOTHER-IN-LAW

I don't recall what it was she said,
But a tear in her eye I saw,—
And, turning homeward, I blessed the head
Of my absent mother-in-law,
And, somehow, I wished that the man who
wrote
For the paper in Omaha
About the plumber and William-goat
And the joke on the mother-in-law,
Might know what it was, when the shadow of
death
Had chilled his heart with awe
And he heard the cry of his firstborn's breath,
To have a mother-in-law.
Perhaps in those days of care and pain
The ice in his heart might thaw
In the gentle sun and the kindly rain
From the heart of a mother-in-law.
Ah! let me look back, when in childhood
plays,
I shouted the word "Grand-ma"
And never guessed that in earlier days
She had been a mother-in-law.
Fly through the rain, O Lincoln train,
But remember that you draw,
At each piston stroke, o'er the ties of oak,
My heart with my mother-in-law.

MANILLA BAY

MANILLA BAY, APRIL 30, 1898

What flashlight throws upon the screen,
This news from far-off Philippine,
Where through the darkness of the bay,
Victorious Dewey led the way?
A hundred guns the channel swept,
Beneath the quick torpedo slept,—
Beyond the Spanish navy's pride
Blazed with its batteries' broadside,—
Defying danger through the night,
The stars and stripes have won the fight.

Rise up, from all your mountain lands,
Brave Negrito and Malay bands.
Rise up, for on the Sulu sea,
The flag of freedom floats for ye;
Three hundred years your sinewy backs
Have sweat to pay a foreign tax;
Three hundred years has Spanish greed,
Reaped harvest where ye sowed the seed.
Rise up, fair Island of Luzon,
The day has come, delayed so long,
When priestcraft's art, and statecraft's rule,
Give way for freedom's public school.
There, where the Spanish ensign flies
Above the dark Manilla walls
The patriot's spirit sinks and dies
Or faintly from its prison calls;

MANILLA BAY

Rise up, and greet at our behest
The star of Freedom from the west.

Look up, oh sister of the seas,
Through tears fanned by the Gulf stream breeze,
Twin sister of Oppression's rod
Look up, lift up your eyes to God ;
From starving child and open grave
Look up, behold the hand to save !
From Santiago's mountain tips,
From Santa Clara's fields of cane
Look up with prayer upon the lips
For light that flashes o'er the main ;
Look up and greet the rising day,
And tidings from Manilla bay.

Stand up, Columbia, from the sea,
Thy sons send greetings unto thee ;
Quick-eyed, strong-souled, with trained hands,
They prove their deeds on distant strands,
Yet not for glory, but for good,
They dared the straits of fire and blood,
And not to conquer, but to free,
The thunder of their guns shall be ;
Stand up, Columbia, take thy place,
To raise and free the human race ;
Long may the children of distress,
The flutter of thy banners bless,
And may thy children's children prove
War ends in liberty and love.

THE MESSAGE FROM GALILEE

THE MESSAGE FROM GALILEE

Listen, ye sons of the morning,
Hearken! Oh, Christian land,
Hush, while ye hear the warning
Borne from a distant land;—
Not with Trade's sordid plunder,—
Not with the march of men,—
Not with the steel-deck's thunder,
Cometh the Christ again.

Strength to the strong who conquer
By the rifle's fitful glare;
But love and faith be the anchor
Of a people who trust in prayer;
Shall the muster of armed legions
Shall powder and blood make clear
To the dwellers in darkened regions
What American hearts hold dear?

I know that the Briton slumbers
On the Indian tiger's skin
With never a thought of the numbers
Of the tiger's jungle kin;
I know that across the borders
Sharp mown by the scythe of war
The Cossack carries the orders
Of his master—the Russian czar.

THE MESSAGE FROM GALILEE

I know,—but why should I reckon
The empires that Force hath known?—
Go where their graveyards beckon
And dig for their story of stone;
This is the voice of Palmyra,—
Smothered in desert sand,—
This of Phœnician Tyra,—
Sunk where her ships were manned;

The beauty of buried Damascus,
The glory of Greece and of Rome,
Rise from their graves to ask us:—
“Does America seek our doom?”
“We sailed” say they “with the current;
“We ‘followed the flag’ afar;
“We poured our youth like a torrent
“In the tide of foreign war.

“Ours was the loftiest passion
“The ages had yet unrolled
“Ours the latest fashion
“Whether of gods or of gold;
“The torch of civilization,
“By might of sword and spear
“We bore to remotest nation
“Behold us buried here!

THE MESSAGE FROM GALILEE

"Go on in the road of conquest,
"Go on in the path of blood,—
"And still the wails of the vanquished
"With Psalms ye sing to your God;
"Go—load your Christ in a cannon
"With the powder prisms of hell,—
"In the battery of Mammon
"It shall serve its purpose well."

And up from the heathen altars
That perished so long ago,
From the places where Christian martyrs
Died that the faith might grow;
From the ashes and scattered embers
Of a people who murdered Paul
Came a message my soul remembers,—
"Your fate is the fate of us all!"

Oh mother-land, true and tender,
Say to the isles of the sea:
"Ye are ransomed not to surrender,
"Ye are ransomed to make you free;
"By the memories, dear and olden,
"Of Yorktown and Bunker Hill,—
"By the grace of the Rule that is Golden
"We grant you freedom still."

THE MESSAGE FROM GALILEE

Then listen, ye sons of the morning,
Awaken, oh patriot band,
Pray tonight for the dawning
Of light in our Christian land;—
Pray,—and work,—for the wonder—
In the islands of the sea—
That needs no cannon's thunder—
The gospel of Galilee.



THE AGE OF CHIVALRY

I read this very night
In an old volume, of that valor bright,
That for fair lady's passing nod or smile
Broke hostile lances at the jousting stile,—
Through sleepless nights and foodless days be-
trayed

Penance for sin; life passion for a maid,—
Yet lived afar from favor or caress,
Suffered in silence with no love to bless;
Worshipping woman, glorifying God,
And sparing not the shoulder from the rod.

* * * * *

Strangely grotesque unto me did appear
The age of chivalry, in my early year;
Romantic and unreal—even more—
Flights of the fancy of the troubadour;
Not mortal man, but medieval dreams
Pursued through bane and blood such fabled
schemes;

Defied such dangers, agonized such pain—
To win at last a damsel's distant deign.
Ah me! Since then life's battlefield hath
wrought

A chivalry which once was never thought;
And woman's worth,—more dear than kingly
blade,—

Laid upon life a loftier accolade
Than e'er inspired the medieval pen
Or crossed the sea to face the Saracen.



"How Good to Live Beneath a Cloudy Sky."

Page 88

A CLOUDY DAY

Too bright the sun shone yesterday,
With hot caress on fields of curling corn,—
Burning the green of meadows yet unshorn
Till the wild bird sung there unseen his lay.

Across a thousand miles of prairie grass and
grain,
Out of the southwest cave where desert dra-
gons are,—
Cliff dwellers' kitchen,—oven doors ajar;—
The scent of cinders on the breath of flame!

Today—above dark continents of cloudy
screen,—
From the deep Gulf's evaporating pool,
Or peaks of melting mountains, white and
cool,—
I know the sun still shines, although his face
unseen.

How good to live beneath a cloudy sky,—
The gray, soft undertones of sober thought
Flow in from all the prairie depths un-
sought,—
The restful distance soothes the mind and eye.

Too bright for man's unshaded gaze,—
The Spirit of the universe,—
The Central Sun of Will and Force,
Shines on above this mortal mist and haze.
July, 1906.

THE PATRIOT DEAD

THE PATRIOT DEAD

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.

Sweet in the days of Roman worth,
The Roman counted death,
When for his rugged land of birth
He gave his latest breath.

And thus, in every land and time,
Where patriot pulses throb,
Their heroes count the deed sublime
To die for home and God.

Then let for every soldier's mound,
And each heroic spot,
The grateful teardrops wet the ground,
Nor flowers be forgot.

Let England mourn for those who fell
For her at Marston Moor;
And France still sing of Charles Martel
Who fought the field of Tours.

For Limerick's walls and banks of Boyne
The Irish harp still rings,
Sweden shall still with Prussia join
To praise their hero kings.

And still, as long as heather waves,
The Scottish heart shall yearn
For those who sleep in patriot graves,
For Bruce at Bannockburn,

THE PATRIOT DEAD

But oh! for us no glories fled
Our throbbing hearts shall thrill
Like those that linger round thy dead,
Shiloh and Bunker Hill!

The one defied the tyrant's reign
And dashed his scepter down:—
The other broke the black man's chain
And placed on him the crown.

No bullet's sting or bayonet's shock
Now stirs that hero band;—
Their sepulcher the solid rock
Where Hope and Freedom stand.

Then let the Roman annals claim
Horatius at the bridge;—
Our flowers for those who faced the flame
On Missionary Ridge!

Let hearts still glow with patriot fire
On this Memorial Day
And children learn from patriot sire
For Fatherland to pray.

And sweet and calm their resting place
In summer evening rain
Who for the flag and exiled race
Poured out their lives in pain.

May 30, 1892.



"Two children strayed with Nature."

A QUESTION

A QUESTION

Sitting this Sunday afternoon I trace
Upon the sky serene a tranquil face,—
Such face a poet made a journey's end
To find the face become his dearest friend:
Beyond the sky and face—toward the west—
Stretches the prairie's scarred and broken
breast:—

Oh, prairie, sky and face—each one recalls
The childhood sketches hung in Memory's halls.

Dear early etchings—age forever fled—
When the wild prairie felt the wilder tread
Of Nature's nurslings—while the tender sod
Told the clear stars its messages to God;
When in the starry morning of the land
Two children strayed with Nature, hand in
hand,—

Lived in her favor,—laughed in her delights,—
Stretching the summer evenings into nights,—
Life was so long in that dear, dawning haze
We reckoned not its years, but only days.

Oh, days and years of prairie childhood, whence
Shall there return to me your recompense?
Oh, sky of childhood, bending o'er me low,
When shall I know again your early glow?
Oh, friend of childhood, shall the answer be
Your face before me through eternity?

THE VISION

THE VISION

Somewhere I know in the Land of the Real
Dwells the Vision I sometimes scan ;—
That woman's secret—her heart's ideal—
The soul of a hero,—the face of a man.

Somewhere in the music of moving street,—
Somewhere in the silence of study air,—
Throbs the pulsing chord of his footfall fleet,—
Bends his eager face to the volume rare.

Wherever he be, in field or hall,—
Mine or mountain,—sea or plain,—
As the hills reply to the bugle call
My heart re-echoes to his again.

Brave and gentle—without a fear—
With voice and bearing that wake and thrill
Hearts to enterprise high and clear,
Minds to motion with heavenly will.

How shall I know him?—perhaps we met,—
Met and parting clasped the hand,—
Spoke, but never revealed as yet
Signs that the spirit can understand.

Though we should pass through the world un-
known,—
Though in heaven beyond I find
It was God's own image above that shone
On that magic mirror—a maiden's mind :—



THE VISION

(For the crystal spirit, that never dies,
Translates the story of thoughts afar—
As the spectroscope, from the distant skies,
Resolves the glory of farthest star;)

I only know what my heart has felt,—
Somewhere he walks 'mid the ways of men,
Kneels at the crosses where I have knelt,—
Knows the paths where my feet have been.

I only trust with a woman's grace
I shall fill the purpose that God hath planned,
Whether on earth I shall see his face
Or know it beyond the Borderland.



THIRTY-EIGHT, KELLY HALL

It's wondering I can imagine at all
That same blessed room,—38, Kelly Hall;—
The name on my tongue has a sweet Irish taste,
Like the lip of the maiden within it embraced;—
There's the flavor of bog on them both I surmise
When I dream of the depths of those dear Kel-
tic eyes,

Where thro' tender mists of dark hazel and green
Scot Highlands and Lakes of Killarney are
seen,—

Or when deep-sea fog hides the landscape so
fair

Blarney Castle smiles on thro' the rain falling
there.

"Thirty-eight, Kelly Hall"—with its face to the
east,—

The song of the morn fills her soul with its
peace;—

While the summer's sweet breath from the
forest and lake

Shall perfume the breezes that blow,—for her
sake.

There's the touch of a woman's hand felt in the
room,—

A dusting-cloth hush on the trail of the
broom;—



THIRTY-EIGHT, KELLY HALL

A hat on the dresser, the gloves on the chair,—
And unseen assurances woman is there.

The books on the table her head has bent o'er,—
The gown on the hook I remember she wore;—
The last lecture thought in a woman's phrase
drest,—
And a letter which, one day, she wore in her
breast.

So,—this is the vision first seen when I wake—
“38, Kelly Hall,”—by the shore of the lake;—
And the last thought at night “Does she wish I
might call
At the home where she dwells—ivy-clad Kelly
Hall?”

A PROFESSOR OF WORK



A PROFESSOR OF WORK

I learn with surprise and a heart that is sick,
And a sorrow my soul cannot shirk,
There is up on the campus a new pile of brick
Dedicated to hard-fisted work.

It has long been my hope as I looked from my
lair

On this world full of shadow and mirk
That I'd some day be called to a 'Varsity chair
Where I'd never be bothered with work,—

A PROFESSOR OF WORK

Where I'd sit with my books in my study at
ease.

Gowned and slippered and smoke like a
Turk;

I'd dream and I'd think and I'd do as I please
And never be troubled with work.

Now my dream is dispelled and my hope is de-
spair

That pierces my flesh like a dirk—
For I don't want to fill a 'Varsity chair
And be a professor of work.

I don't think I'd like to put overalls on
And shovel a carload of sand;
And my fat arms would ache till the muscles
were gone

To pound on an anvil by hand;—

The domestic economy course I would take
If the girls I might smile at and smirk,
But if asked to wash dishes or help to make cake
It would be just too darned much like work!

So tell Bessey, Miss Bouton, and Chancellor
MacLean

That I don't want to soldier or shirk;—
But I really don't think that the way things now
seem

I can be a professor of work.

(Read at the dedication exercises of Mechanic
Arts Hall, Uni. of Nebraska, 1899. Alleged to
be a communication from A. L. Bixby, of
the Daily State Journal)



Kansas University Football Field, Lawrence.

HOW BENDER WON THE GAME

HOW CAPTAIN BENDER WON THE GAME

In Commemoration of the Notable Football Contest of November 14, 1903.

Sight to stir the student blood,—
That stern battle Kansas showed
Upon her hollow field within the limestone
hills:—

In a thousand Lincoln eyes,
Doubt debates with sore surprise,
From two thousand Kansas throats
Roll their weird, fierce battle-notes,—
Like a caverned coyote's cry,
Like a bat across the sky,—
Floats that cadenced Kansas chant,—
"Rock-chalk" song of things that haunt
Those cretaceous sea-built plains;—
Cross-bones, skulls and grim remains
Of some wild-eyed Troglodyte
Slain in Saurian foot-ball fight,
In fierce Stone Age rushes which the fancy fills

Still above the doubting fear
Rises, strong, Nebraska's cheer;
Plunge on plunge the Kansas foe
Pounds our line with bitter blow,—
Mass en masse the Kansas guard
Breaks a path across the sward,
Near and nearer yet toward Nebraska's goal;

HOW BENDER WON THE GAME

Yard by yard in slow retreat,
What! It cannot mean defeat,
For the Scarlet and the Cream!
Vanish, mad Jayhawking dream!
Booth, O mighty coach and true,
Give us victory anew!
Borg and Mason, tall and strong,
Hold that headlong Kansas throng,
Shout, Nebraska bleachers. Call
Louder still, "Stonewall! Stonewall!"

Back upon our five-yard line,
Like a storm-bent mountain pine,
In the last ditch dying hard
For that slender strip of sward;
For the glory and the fear
Of our Alma Mater dear;
For the honor and the fame
Of our loved Nebraska's name;—
Stand like granite, living stone,
Cornland muscle, blood and bone,—
Athlete heroes,—spirits picked,—
Bender, Wilson, Benedict—
Twice and thrice the Kansas breakers backward
roll.

Name him,—the football hero name,—
Who can win the desperate game:

HOW BENDER WON THE GAME



HOW BENDER WON THE GAME

Who in fierce Kansas' face
Can cross the white-barred battle place,
And plant the ball upon the farther line in vic-
tory.

Charge on charge; blow for blow,
Swings the conflict to and fro.
The low November sun
Tells the last half nearly done;
Beating heart and anxious eye,
Vainly for the victor cry.
Guard and tackle, back and end,
Still their hard-pressed line defend.
Suddenly upon our right
Springs the Captain into sight,—
Springs from a struggling mass,
Shot through a narrow pass.
Under his arm the ball,
Past tackle or recall;
Headed beyond control,
Straight for the Kansas goal.

Hark! That Nebraska yell!
Was it the grandstand fell?
Whoop, every megaphone
Till the last lung is blown.
Up to that Kansas sky
Hats, coats and blankets fly.
Ho, Kansas, blue Jayhawk,

HOW' BENDER WON THE GAME

Croak thy weird chant of "chalk."
Wave Scarlet and the Cream
Let the Platte eagle scream.
In Lincoln town tonight
Bells ring and bonfires light,
While all with loud acclaim
Write on the football scroll of fame
The Captain's name who won the field
In Lawrence town in 1903.



U. of N. Class of 1902—Reunion of 1905.

1902 CLASS REUNION

(Lines read at the third annual reunion of the class of 1902, U. of N., held June 14, 1905,—2304 Washington street.)

Stranger, kindly take a cheer,
Hevn't see ye fur a year,—
Seems to me thet we hev met.
I cayn't quite that face ferget:—
Beard's a little stiffer grown
Where the stubble hez been mown,—
Little longer, sharper, jaw,—
Cheeks not quite so round and—raw;
Forehead little bulgier shows,—
Mebbe little redder nose—
(These here western winds, y' know,
Sorter TANS a feller so.)—
An' yer manners,—now, fur fair,—
Seem more quiet,—yes I swear
Wouldn't b'lieve the tales they tell:—
How ye'd raise the football yell—
Git out an' parade the town—
Nothin' on but yer nightgown,—
Red hot class scrap in the Hall
Till Doc Andrews had to call
The police—he 'lowed that fight,—
Put his'n at Gettysburg out o' sight,—
Is it raly, shorely, true
You're the Boy of Nineteen Two?

Sister, welcome, glad you've come,
 Try to make yourself to hum;
 (Things is not yet put to right
 Round the Ranch to suit me quite)—
 Children—well?—Er-EX-cuse me. Say,
 That's jest my old-fashioned way;—
 In my August afternoon
 Never thinkin' May er June,—
 Blunderin' on as bold as Sin—
 See a Man-trap,—stumble in—
 What I meant fur to EN-quire—
 "How's the singin' in the choir?"
 An' how young an'—fresh,—you look,
 Fit to have yer pictur' took;—
 Older? Not a blessed week
 Sence you went on Senior Sneak,—
 Marched in on Professor Wyer—
 Whooped the class yell octave higher;—
 From the Grandstand gave acclaim
 To our football heroes' fame;—
 While dark flashes of yer eyes
 Meted out Fame's fairest prize:
 Darin',—yet with girlish art
 Holding hid yer woman's heart;—
 Any one would know 'twas YOU—
 Grand old Girl of Nineteen Two."
 Welcome, girls an' boys, fur I
 'M glad to with ye classify,—

Feel thet in these middle years,
 Growin' young about my ears,—
 Hitched up with the Colts in team
 Life will longer,—sweeter,—seem ;—
 It's a secret,—spose ye know?—
 I was allays dumb an' slow ;—
 Took to git my first A. B.
 Nigh on nineteen years, y' see,—
 Wuz so long a scufflin' thro,—
 Eighty Three till Nineteen Two, —
 Thet I allays will AF-feck
 This here country dialeck :—
 Got in follerin' the plow,
 Ridin' range and punchin' cow,—
 Talkin' Sioux an' sometimes mix-
 In' printin' in with politics ;—
 Sticks upon my tongue an' lip—
 Sandbur on a hoss's hip—
 But I'm mighty glad, aint you?—
 Couldn't pass till Nineteen Two?

College lore an' days—now there!—
 That's a subjeck fur a prayer!
 Remember, brother, while I speak,—
 How hard we tried to rope an' ride that Greek?
 Old Homer and Thucydides
 'D bring a broncho-buster to his knees ;—
 "Menin aeide Thea,"—long, long ago,—

THAT was my favorite, y' know?
An' then the Latin,—any of you tell
How the old farmer, Virgil, found the trail to
Hell?—

“Facilis descensus,”—some of us young men
Larned that before—perhaps we may agen.
But of them Romans, likeliest of the lot,—
Jest hand me Horace fur long-distance shot;
Read him—it seemed like old frontierin' days,—
There wuz the Mount Soracte, the cabin, the
fireside blaze;
He named the winds, an' called 'em by their
name,
An' said he'd built a monument better than brass
fur fame;
An' studyin' Horace evenin's late an' damp,—
First time I felt Old Rome a homelike place to
camp.

An' then, these modern kind of furrin' talk,—
Fur me, jest plain old Deutsch wins in a walk;
Them deep an' chesty “nochs” an' “dochs” an'
“ach”
Und alles sonst von Lesen und von Sprach'—
I'd like to spend another Lebenzeit
Post-Germanizing, süsse Seligkeit,—
Schiller and Heine fur my mornin' meal,—

Lessing and Goethe when the shadows steal,—
Singin' at night that song of Lauterbach,—
The place, you know, I lost my heart an' sock:—
That *was* my ambition while I yet was young,—
I'll turn it over to Annetta Sprung.

Science! how long an' faithfully we tried
To climb together up yer rugged side;—
The Old Chem. Lab.—to some of us how dear,—
The glass retorts, the corks an' tubing queer,—
The Bunsen fire—the acid-tested floor
With HCl, HNO₃ and H₂SO₄;
Methyl an' Ethyl an' the swarm
We stew together makin' chloroform;
Sweet your perfumes, Old Lab., but why these
sad remarks?—

Your odors linger still round Classmate Mildred Parks.

How many hours intense with searchin' hopes
We bent above high power microscopes,
Saw a new world inside a rain-drop space
Swarmin' with critters of an unknown race:
Desmids an' diatoms drew with pencil point an'
eye

While protozoan craft went cruisin' by,
The nostoc's log chain fur a model set,
An' fished with Hydrodictyon's water net,

Or thro cell tissue marked from chasm to chasm
Stream the primeval pulse of protoplasm.

Unshaken friendship from this world's rude
shock

Datin' from days together breakin' rock,—
Dear geologic jail—where we first got right
With bryozoa an' with trilobite,
Or saw the rockdust write its name
With brilliant colors in the blowpipe's flame.

Oh, English Lit.—this surely, this was tough,—
On Sherman's March to feed us Shedd's and
Stuff,—

To step to Piper's music with a sigh,—
And while we're Browning,—turn us o'er to
Frye.

How oft with Milton hev we cried with groans;
"What needs my Shakespeare fur his honored
bones?"—

With Hamlet, dread that dreams come after
death,

While washin' hands from murdering Mac-
beth;—

One rainbow gleam breaks thro' these dismal
days—

Upon it read: "Professor Mabel Hays."

Then some of us went into Poly Con,—
Met Mills an' Marshall, Ricardo and Jevons;—
An' still a few who thought that easy work
Tuk in the Austrian school with Böhm-
Bawerk,—

The Wages Fund an' Theory of Rent
Got well thrashed out,—er I'm not worth a
cent,—

Yit there's one thing I never understand,—
None of 'em satisfied my theory of Land;—
Explain it,—no, I think, like Henry George
I'll write a Poly Con about so large.

Then there's American History,—3 and 4,—
Professor Caldwell, will you close the door?
We'll have explained the famous diagram
Of Broad and Strict Construction,—you gave
us in Exam.,—

We'll tell the tale of tariff, high and low,—
We'll name the Compromises an' tell what made
'em so,—

To distant springs our civic stream we'll trace,—
An' look the future fearlessly in face;—
We'd history to learn with you not long ago,—
We've history to make; let's make it best we
know.

Ah, Comrades, classmates, like the Wandering
Jew,—

I've rambled fur, let me come back to you;
How often in the future shall we meet
To clasp the hand,—to hold communion
sweet;—

Some of us wander now in distant lands,—
In Philippines, in China, in Japan,—
Wherever Duty calls our steps shall turn,—
Grip hard the New yet for the Old shall
yearn;—

For college classmates form no narrow clan,—
We gladly own the Brotherhood of Man:—
Our password "Love,"—our aim "Democ-
racy,"—

To know the Truth an' feel it makes us free.

HAROUN AL HAKIM'S QUEST

HAROUN AL HAKIM'S QUEST

(Read at the 25th anniversary celebration of
the Hesperian Club of Doane College, 1898.)

"There are no friends like the old friends,"—

(This was the genii song),—

"There are no hearts like the old hearts,

"Steady as steel and strong;

"There is no love like the old love,

"Faithful and firm and true,

"There is no truth like the old truth—

"The old that is ever new."

* * * * *

In those fair days of Moorish power and pride,
Before Granada fell or great Abdallah died;—

In those loved days, to every scholar dear,
Ere yet Cordova cringed beneath Castilian
spear;—

When every mountain side in southern Spain
With smiling harvest praised the Moslem
reign;—

When Christian students thronged those Arab
halls

Where from the mosque the Imam daily calls;—

"Allah il Allah—only God is great—

"Bow down unto Him ere it is too late;—

"Allah il Allah—only God is just,—

"Kneel down before him, children of the
dust,"—

HAROUN AL HAKIM'S QUEST

When art and architecture, hand in hand,
With peace and plenty dwelt in that fair land,
And (century blossoms of six hundred years)—
Science and Letters blooming lost their fears;—
While Europe groping in the ages dark
Sought at this Paynim shrine the heavenly spark,
(And sought it not in vain) to light the fire
Where Greek and Roman embers low expire,—
—That time and place tradition doth disclose
Dwelt a disciple of famed Averroes.
Haroun al Hakim—blessed be the name—
(Two Moslem heroes once had worn the
same)—

Was one of noble birth and gently bred,—
The wreath of twenty summers crowned his
head;

Long had he listened in Cordovan walls
To Learning as she lectured in her halls;—
Night after night, when others were asleep,
Had delved in lore and logic long and deep;
Skilled with alembic—in the starry space
The purpose of the Master's mind to trace,
And in the paths philosophy had trod
To look past priests and bibles up to God.

Held ever in his breast this glowing youth
The hope that he might find and know the
truth;—





St. Peter's Cathedral.

That truth so tempered to the mortal mind
To cure the ills and follies of mankind;—
And in his heart another dear desire
Lit up its chambers with a vestal fire—
Another hope of early years—to prove
The meaning and the mystery of love.
Though many a classic face with winning smiles
Had met his gaze in academic aisles,
And many an earnest heart and kindly hand
Been linked with his in friendship's sacred
band,—
Through all his veins there poured the thrilling
tide
Of blood that burned, yet was unsatisfied,
And every secret fibre of his brain
Still throbbed for love and truth with ardent
pain.

Forth from his mountain college in the west
Haroun al Hakim went upon his quest—
Knight-errant, challenging the world to give
That truth and love which he must find to live.

* * * * *

Weeks passed before his aching Arab feet
First trod the Roman city's sacred street,
Where on the ruins of a world o'erthrown
Saint Peter's bishop claimed the world his
own.—

HAROUN AL HAKIM'S QUEST

He saw the Christian Pontiff in his pride,
He saw the beggars for whom Christ had died;
He saw it all—the rags and the romance—
The Latin paupers and the knights of France—
He saw the surly haste and sordid zeal
That sold God's blessing as it sold a meal;—
He saw beneath the monkish cowl and hood
The heart of bigot and the thirst for blood—
The people's ruin and the church's decay—
And sadly journeyed farther on his way.

Beyond the seas that wash the walls of Rome
Philosophy and art once had their home,—
Students of truth and readers of the skies
There pointed man to higher destinies.
Al Hakim followed far with eager breath
To learn the mysteries of life and death—
He found the wild goats feeding by the gate
Where once ruled Plato's thought or Pericles'
debate;—

He found the cassocked priests of Byzantine
Still wrangling whether water turned to wine,
And if the body of their Christ once dead
Were eaten in a wafer cake of bread—
While starving mobs without, beyond control,
Fought for the body and forgot the soul.—
Instead of truth and love he found too late
Falsehood and folly mixed with greed and hate

Sick with surprise—still onward journeying—
Jerusalem, the City of the King!—
On Zion's mount the cross of peace displayed—
Beneath in every street the lance and blade;
Bold Sensuality with religious mask
In ease and wealth shirked every Christian
task,—

Knights of the Cross who boasted in their pride
His sepulchre whom they daily crucified,
And still ablaze with gems and jewels kept
Gethsemane—the garden where He wept.
In Golgotha—the valley of the dead—
A glittering chapel raised its garish head—
Where Mary stood beside the empty grave
They robbed the people whom He came to save.

Haroun, with loathing horror of it all,
Sped to Damascus, like another Saul,
—No noonday meteor turned Al Hakim back,
No angel of the Lord stood in his track,
Yet as he slept by ancient Pharpar's stream
The genii of his birth sang in his dream:

“There are no friends like the old friends,”

(This was the genii song),

“There are no hearts like the old hearts,

“Steady as steel and strong;

“There is no love like the old love,

“Faithful and firm and true,

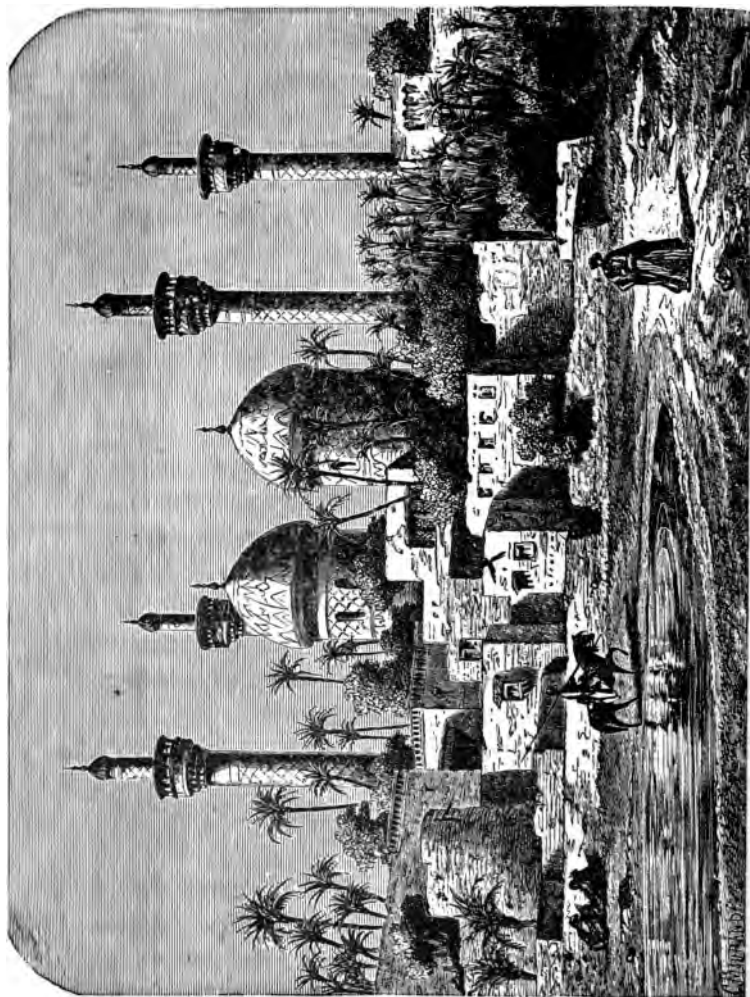
HAROUN AL HAKIM'S QUEST

"There is no truth like the old truth—
"The old that is ever new."

Behold at last, oh wanderer of the west,
Here in Damascus welcome peace and rest;—
Here, here, at last, beneath the mosque and
dome,

Thine Arab soul shall find itself at home.
No Christian spleen here mocks the soul in need.
Or cuts a brother's throat for love of creed,—
No hateful factions—what?—alas, alas,
Beard of the prophet, hath it come to pass?
Doctors of Irak and of Basra here,—
Medina mufti, armed with bow and spear;—
Religious feud burns fierce in every nook
While Persecution checks her bloody book;
Each in the Koran seeks the Almighty's will
And finds it written "Blest be they that kill";
The plodding poor bound down to grinding toil
Perished like cattle on their native soil,
While owners of the earth their wealth displayed
And made religion servitor to trade.

Stricken as though at loss of dearest friend
Al Haroun journeyed on to Farther Zend:—
In schools of Bagdad for a brief delay
He slept a night and tarried but a day,—



The City of Bagdad.

HAROUN AL HAKIM'S QUEST

Asked them "What is the aim of human life?"
And found their answer "Victory in strife."
Then onward still, his journey scarce begun,
To where the Persian mountains greet the sun;
In that far land of shadow and eclipse
He learned his lesson from a Hindoo's lips:
"What is the crown this human life to bless?"
The Hindoo answered simply "Nothingness."
"Blessed Nirvana—that is man's estate,
"To it shall come the lowest and the great;
"All other life is shadow in a glass,
"This is the substance that shall come to pass;—
"This is the message of the mystic scroll—
"Man loses life to gain a living soul—
"That soul again, like raindrop in a sea,
"Shall lose itself through all eternity.
"This is the final destiny of youth—
"This is the end of love,—this is the endless
truth."

* * * * *

Student of Horace, do I need to say
"Mutato nomine, narratur de te?"
Oh, western comrade is my story true?
Change time and place and is it told of you?
Where have you wandered since the days of
youth
In what far countries seen love and truth?

HAROUN AL HAKIM'S QUEST

Where have you seen the cross of Christ displayed

And Christian murder made a nation's trade?

In what proud city of the farther east

Sat cheek by jowl at Dives' dainty feast—

Who bade the policeman stationed at the door

Tell Lazarus to go and sin no more?

In what Chicago ghetto's squalid crowd

Marked the starved seamstress stitching at her shroud,

Her sisters sold into a life of shame

And license levied on their fallen fame?

Where did you note the dollars wrung from rent,

Or usury piled cent upon per cent?

Who made the market place a public school

To teach denial of the Golden Rule,

Yet raised to God in heaven ceaseless prayer

His will be done on earth as it is there?

Saw little children die like summer flies,

Shut out by poverty from woods and skies,

While saints repeat the maxim Moloch made

That "competition is the life of trade"?

Who has not wearied in the campaign's heat

Of partisan contention and deceit?

Or trod the desert waste afar to press

From sphinx-like lips their secret: "Nothingness"?

HAROUN AL HAKIM'S QUEST

Who has not longed with ardor none could
know

For the old friendships of so long ago?
The old love and old truth again to meet
And fling himself repentant at their feet?
For the old gospel—"brotherhood of men,"—
For the old hope that made that gospel plain;—
For the old slumber by dear childhood's stream,
And the old song of genii in our dream:

"There are no friends like the old friends,"
(This is the song they sing),

"There are no hearts like the old hearts,
"Honor to them we bring,

"There is no love like the old love,
"That was once for you and me;

"The new truth is still the old truth
"For the truth it must ever be."

HOCH DAS KAISERLEIN



HOCH DAS KAISERLEIN

In Potsdam Schloss, bei Stadt Berlin,—
Geboren ist von Prinzessin—
On July 4th, of Prussian line,—
A baby :—"Hoch das Kaiserlein."

Mit Pulverschoss und Donnerschlag
Frueh kam Er an dem Freiheitstag,—
And Germans here, and on the Rhine
Drink standing "Hoch das Kaiserlein."

O viel geliebtes Vaterland
Dir reicht Amerika die Hand,—
Blood of the ancient Saxon line
Cries "Welcome, Hoch das Kaiserlein."

Es ist hier gar kein Kaiserreich,—
Kaiser und Knab' sind unser gleich,—
Yet for the love of auld lang syne
We echo, "Hoch das Kaiserlein."
July 4, 1906.

SIE KANN NICHT ENDEN

Goethe—1749-1832.

Wenn ich nun gleich das weisse Blatt dir
schickte,

Anstatt dass ich's mit Lettern erst beschreibe,
Ausfuelltest du's vielleicht zum Zeitvertreibe
Und sendetest's an mich, die Hochbeglueckte.

Wenn ich den blauen Umschlag dann erblickte:
Neugierig schnell, wie es geziemt dem Weibe,
Riss' ich ihn auf, dass nichts verborgen bleibe;
Da laes' ich, was mich muendlich sonst
entzueckte:

Lieb Kind! Mein artig Herz! Mein einzig
Wesen!

Wie du so freundlich meine Sehnsucht stilltest
Mit suessem Wort und mich so ganz verwoehn-
test.

Sogar dein Lispeln glaubt' ich auch zu lesen,
Womit du liebend meine Seele fuelltest
Und mich auf ewig vor mir selbst verschoentest.

SHE CANNOT END

If I had sent unto thee, as a token,
This page, snow-white, with ne'er a pencil
flavored,—

For pastime unto me,—the highly favored,—
Perhaps thou'dst written all thy love unspoken.

Then I, the blue envelope's seal unbroken,
With curious haste—as doth become a woman—
Tore wide to read the secrets sweet and human
Which otherwise thy lips to me had spoken :

Dear child; my own sweetheart; my only dar-
ling,—

Who with endearing ways doth soothe my long-
ing,—

And with sweet words dost woo to joys su-
pernal,—

E'en thus I hoped to read thy whispers thril-
ling,—

By which thy love through all my pulses throng-
ing

The glory in my life hast made eternal.

LA TOMBE DIT A LA ROSE

Victor Hugo, 1802-1885.

La tombe dit a la rose :
—Des pleurs dont l'aube t'arrose
Que fais-tu, fleur des amours?
La rose dit a la tombe :
—Que fais-tu de ce qui tombe
Dans ton gouffre ouvert toujours?

La rose dit :—Tombeau sombre,
De ces pleurs je fais dans l'ombre
Un parfum d'ambre et de miel.
La tombe dit :—Fleur plaintive,
De chaque ame qui m'arrive
Je fais un ange du ciel.

The tomb said to the rose :
"With the dewdrop, the morning's bright tear,
"What doest thou, dear?"
Said the rose to the tomb :
"What doest thou, in thy gloom,
"With the souls thou dost daily consume?"

The rose said : "Somber grave!
"From the teardrops which lave
"A sweet perfume in secret, I take."
The tomb said : "Tender flower,
"Of each soul, every hour,
"An angel of heaven I make."

THE LOVER'S EPITAPH, FROM DON
QUIXOTE

Miguel Cervantes—1547-1616.

Yaze aqui de un Amador
El misero cuerpo elado,
Que fue pastor de ganado,
Perdido por desamor
Murio a manos del rigor
De una esquiva, hermosa, ingrata,
Con quien su imperio dilata
La tirania, de amor.

Here lies the poor, proud body of a cowboy
lover,—

A woman's cruel hand it was from which he
died;

She scorned his love—he never will recover—
Free from her tyranny he's over the divide.

SONNET 81

PETRARCH, 1304-1374.

Cesare, poi che'l traditor d'Egitto
Li fece il don dell' onorata testa,
Celando l'allegrezza manifesta,
Pianse per gli occhi fuoor, siccome e scritto.

Ed Annibal, quand' all imperio afflitto
Vide farsi fortuna si molesta,
Rise fra gente lagrimosa e mesta,
Per isfogare il suo acerbo despetto:

E cosi avven, che l' animo ciascuna
Sua passion sotto 'l contrario manto
Ricopre con la vista or chiara or bruna,

Pero, s' alcuna volta i'rido o canto,
Facciol perch' io non ho se non quest'una
Via da celare il mio angoscioso pianto.

SONNET 81

PETRARCH.

When Caesar saw before him, by Egypt's traitor
smitten,

The head of Pompey in its blood congealing
He turned his face (his secret joy concealing)
And wept his eyes out—thus 'tis written.

And Hannibal, from fallen Carthage flitting,
In far-off lands beheld his fortunes weary,
Made laughter among peoples sad and
dreary,—
Burning his grief with bravery befitting.

Thus still, beneath a mantled face contrary,
Each human spirit hides its secret passion,
And outer joy with inner grief may vary;—
So I, who laugh and sing in tender fashion:—
I know no other way but making merry
To hide the piteous anguish of my station.

WHY THE WOOD DUCK'S EYES ARE RED

WHY THE WOOD DUCK'S EYES ARE RED

(Song Myths of the Sioux.)

Ka wanna heya ahiyaya :

“Istohmus waci po ;

Tuwe yatonwe cin,

Ista nisapi kta ;

Ista nisapi kta.”

Unkan Skiska wan tokaheya tonwe cin heon ista
sa keyapi.

Unktomi, the magician sang :

“With your eyes shut dance,

If you peep a single glance

Always red-eyed you shall see

Always red-eyed you shall be.”

But the wood duck looked, they said,—

From that day his eyes were red.

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND'S MESSAGE

It's strange how streaks of sandy grit
Will kind of stick together;
Here's Dan and Grover not a whit
The worse for chilly weather.
Old Grover says to Col. Dan:
"The bugbear British lion
May scare a pilgrim now and then
From off the road to Zion;
And Calvin Brice and Watterson
May stab us in the gizzard;
We'll never crawfish, will we, Dan,
Or frighten at a blizzard?
We'll keep our grit and powder dry
And load our tariff cannon,
And blow old Sackville-West skyhigh,
Back to the banks of Shannon."

TOMMY REED, OF MAINE

"I would not vote for Cleveland, No," said little
Tommy Reed,

"I'd stand for these United States, I swear I
would indeed.—"

And all the people, east and west, joined in the
loud applause

That greeted Thomas Reed, of Maine, defender
of their cause.

But ah! the disappointment deep—the ague vast
and cold

When valiant Thomas Reed, of Maine, supported
bonds for gold.

The Rothschilds' bargain, laws defied,—the na-
tion's open shame—

Grover and all—were ratified by Thomas Reed,
of Maine.

Oh never, sure, the west shall more lean on a
broken Reed

Nor sacrifice her best before the golden god of
greed;

But common people, north and south, will make
it mighty plain

There'll be a presidential drouth for Tommy
Reeds, of Maine.

HOW WILL THEY SETTLE THE BILL?

HOW WILL THEY SETTLE THE BILL?

Let "confidence" come with the flourish of drum,
And the tootings from hundreds of mills,
But I'd like to know, while they whistle and
 blow,
How the farmer will settle the bills?

I've lived in this state some years twenty-eight,
Through grasshoppers, drouth and like ills,—
They may toot and may blow, but when produce
 is low,
The farmers can't settle the bills.

Now corn has gone down in a hole in the ground,
And hogs are three cents where they kill,
We've fifty cent wheat—for Nebraska to eat,—
And the grangers to settle the bill.

Put up the freight rate, make more loans in the
 state,
And think you have ended our ills,
But the man who will groan 'neath the freight
 rate and loan,
Is the farmer who settles the bills.

HOW WILL THEY SETTLE THE BILL?

I hope "confidence" yet will pay off the debt
That rests on our prairies and hills,
For our oats and our corn look slim and for-
lorn,
To the farmer who settles the bills.

Let the looms whiz and roar from the lakes to
seashore,
Making millions of goods in our mills,
But I rise to inquire of the factory fire
How the farmer will settle the bills?
October, 1896.



ECHOES FROM LITTLE
SALT—THE BOND
ISSUE



READIN' the scheme of
this Lyman B. Gage,
To put our greenbacks in
a stove or steel cage.
An' 'stead of 'em givin'
us bonds and bank
notes,
Out in this neck o' weeds
kinder sticks in our
throats.

They's a lot us cornhuskers don't know on
finance,
But we don't like to fiddle and pay for the dance,
An' banks drawin' interest on notes that they
owe,
Looks like eatin' their cake and a keepin' their
dough.

In the heads of folks filled with these finance
ideas
That rattle around like a pod of dry peas,
It may be a greenback ain't hardly wuth smoke,
That banknotes is good when bankers go broke ;
I can't get it in my ol' battering ram
A banker is better'n our own Uncle Sam.

ECHOES FROM LITTLE SALT

I remember the day when the paymaster paid
The greenbacks first to us—it was after the raid
With Stoneman—we cut through the heart of
the South

A swath like a prairie fire after a drouth;
It seems like a dream from some far distant
shore—

Them nights in the saddle, them days in the roar
Of cannon and rifles, farm boys from the plow
Chargin' hell and high water. I think of it now;
It seems I can see that ol' butternut line
Straight ahead of us now in that forest of pine,
Straight ahead in our road those rifles' red
breath

Mowin' gaps in our ranks like the scythe-stroke
of death;

But on with the cheers to the Union again
Where the Stars and Stripes wave and where
plowboys is men,—

And money we pledged with our lives and our
lands

Was waitin' for us in the paymaster's hands.

We fought for the greenbacks—we made 'em all
good

As wheat, or as gold, with our nation's best
blood.

They're good as gold yet; 't' the bankers can't
stand

ECHOES FROM LITTLE SALT

To let Uncle Sam issue notes in the land
There'll be enough cranks ready soon with the
votes

Fur to issue the banks as well as the notes.
Drive on with your banks and your bonds—
there's a halt

You'll come to, we're thinkin', out in

LITTLE SALT.

Mortgage Corners, Little Salt Precinct, No-
vember 23, 1897.



ECHOES FROM LITTLE SALT—THE SPANISH
WAR

They got the news down to the store;
The supreme court turned loose Eugene Moore.
An' Cuba's starvin' yit an' Spain
Gone an' blowed up our steamship Maine;
Gage an' McKinley an' Tom Reed
Put their heads together an' agreed
No matter what the contracts hold,
We've got to pay them bonds in gold,
Except Joe Bartley's bond—somehow,
Nobody pays nothin' there nohow.

Cap Price spoke fust: "From whereas to amen
I've been a black republikin—
Voted fur Fremont 'n John P. Hale;
Fit thru' the war 'n been in jail
Fur helpin' niggers free and loose—
But this dose surely cooks my goose."

Old Fritz struck with his Prussian fist
The counter—"Donnerwetter, wie dot ist—
Dot kann ich nicht verstehn viel—
He dakes dot money, but don'd steal!
Dot supreme court yet makes it out
Kraut ist—nicht kraut in sauer kraut.
Ain't it? Pfst! One Dutchman here
Make dot court sauer kraut . . . ar."

ECHOES FROM LITTLE SALT

"Ay ban long times dees contra har,"
Swan Swanson said, "'Bout femteen yar.
Work avara day an' make no harm,
Now ma wife say: 'Swan, you be fool,
An' vote for dees republikan
Who steal it all away agan.'
Now when she hear 'em all gon free,
Bound too, she make et hot for me."

Then up spoke Irish Pat McGuire,
His very brogue ablaze with ire:—
"It's sold, the country is—it's sold
To bondholders and bags o' gold;
The boys that sleeps beneath the bay
Drowned for a Spanish holiday,—
Ireland and Cuba still in chains,
Ould England laughin' at their pains,
How long, how long shall these things be,
Land of the darin' and the free?"

Mortgage Corners, Little Salt Precinct.

SENATOR JOSEPH BURNS



SENATOR JOSEPH BURNS

"Government Ownership and Sixteen to One,—
"That's all we lack—the rest of it is done—
"When the band master touches those two stops
"The Republican band's a band of Pops."

So said Senator Joseph Burns,—
Walking the floor and talking by turns—
As the bills went thro in swift succession
In the closing of the Thirtieth Session.

GOVERNOR GEORGE L. SHELDON

The Pioneers are going,—
In their stead
Sons of the Pioneers take the lead.
Born on some broad Nebraska farm,
Breathing the freedom of the open air,—
Swinging the cornplow with the sunburned arm,
Gathering strength to be, to know, to dare;
Learning the lesson in the district school,
Driving to market on the load of grain,—
Plunging into the deep, old swimming pool,
Facing the snowstorm and the summer rain,—
Up thro such simple, homely life to man's estate
Arise our prophets of new truth and leaders of
the state.

The Pioneers are almost gone,—
But in their stead
Sons of the prophet-pioneers are at the head.



TWO CENTS A MILE

"Two cents a mile, sir, tickets or fare,—
"Nothing else travels—that's on the square—
"McCook to Rulo, Plattsmouth to Valentine,—
"Nothing doing in the free pass line.
"Get your tickets ready—tickets or fare,"—
Was it a dream or a conductor there?
March 6, 1907.





Chadron, Nebraska



POEMS OF CHADRON

(Eight years—among the best years of life—were lived on the northwest frontier at Chadron in Mountain Nebraska. They were years of early settlement, of conflict between grangers and cattlemen, of drouth, of Farmers' Alliance, of Indian war,—of desperate hard times. Nothing I have known is so heroic and heartrending as the struggles of the people on those high plains and mountain slopes to hold their homes, through those years. The life of a country editor is very close to the people—peculiarly so in a new country. From a number of short poems of strictly local character printed then just a few have been chosen. They will be fully understood only by those who "were there," but other readers may find them helps in the interpretation of frontier life.)

Oh! Chadron, land of wheat and pine,
Thy winter suns more mildly shine
Than where the Elkhorn's icy flow
Cuts through deep banks of Fremont snow;
Thy sky serene and gentle breeze
Contrasts with Lincoln's fog and freeze.
Where'er thy exiled sons shall flee
Their hearts still fondly beat for thee.
With modest boast their tongues shall praise
The beauty of thy nights and days,—
The grace that with thy daughters dwells—
Thy railroad shops and canyon dells,
His love thine absent son retains—
Dear city of the Pine Ridge plains.



Chadron, Nebraska



Dawes County Court House.

DAWES COUNTY COURT HOUSE

THE DAWES COUNTY COURT HOUSE

[Every court house has its "ring." Generally it is built by a "ring."]

Now in building court houses, be it not forgot
There's bound to be a contractor's profit spot,
Somewhere in the ceiling or floor or roof,
(All of them can't be inspection proof)
In dome or pillar or colonnade,
Skylight or stairway, frieze or facade,
Covered over with mortar and paint,
But underneath the contractor's taint;
And perhaps that is why when the architect
Smiled and pronounced his plans correct,
He smiled as he thought those plans might hide
The profits of many a queer divide.

SNOW ON THE BAD LAND BUTTES

[Bridge and road politics is a leading issue in all new regions. Controversies over location of them descend to children's children.]

Snow on the Bad Land Buttes—miry in the
gumbo,
Rain a-roarin' down the chutes, White River on
a Jumbo,
High tide in Chadron creek—water gettin'
quicker,
Swingin' round the circle, just like Jim Dahl-
man's liquor,
Sets a man a thinkin' hard while toilin' up the
ridges;
Lookin' at the gullies washed round Sheriff
Bartlett's bridges,
Thinkin' and a wonderin' when the people'll take
a tumble,
Quit good fellow politics; act instead of
grumble,
Put a knife in taxes as hard as they are able,
Stamp old Wall Street's power out, says
A Kicker from the Table.

JOHN BERRY'S TRAIN

[An incident of "shipping voters" at the 1896 election.]

John Berry came bustling in out of the west,
For sheep or vote rustling the boldest and best;
The mavericks roaming on mountain and plain
Came rush through the gloaming on John
Berry's train.

Like showers of manna on Hebrews of old
Sheep hustlers for Hanna came in on our fold;
As crows in their flight would drop down in the
rain
Came hoboes from Whitewood on John Berry's
train.

But northwest Nebraska rose up in her might
And buried those bogus votes deep out of sight;
Let freight rates go higher 'gainst protest and
pain
We pay for the fire in John Berry's train.
November, 1896.

KANE'S FAREWELL

[Frank Kane, who was one of the earliest settlers amid the gumbo hills of Lone Tree precinct, Dawes county, after a nine years' siege, quit the conflict and went to New Castle, Wyoming. Before departing he left a gem of gumbo poetry on my desk, which with a little polishing shines thus:—]

I's sorry for leavin' Father Brophy's bell,
Sorry for leavin' McGannon's well,
Sorry for leavin' Whitney town,—
Frank Currie, Brumbaugh an' the people all
roun'.

Farewell to the place where I've talked and
raved,

Farewell to the widow an' the soldier's grave,
Farewell to the childher that plays on the mud
floor,

Farewell to the tramp that comes up to the door,
Farewell to the place where I made me abode,
Where many's the night I've been lost in the
road.

It is well for the people who knows how to love,
Who believes in the future and meetin' above.

Farewell to the hills I may never more see,
Farewell, forever, to the flats of Lone Tree.



JOHN MAHER AND VON HARRIS

[The struggles between rival democrats in Northwest Nebraska to secure appointments from President Cleveland would fill a large volume.]

John Maher and Von Harris
With their committee men,
Marched up the democratic hill—
And then marched down again.

Von Maher and John Harris
And the democratic hen
Got on a nest of office eggs,
And then got off again.

So let us comfort John and Von,
And let us praise the hen,
For Bourbon eggs she'll sit upon
When next she sits again.



Col. John G. Maher.

ODE TO A MULE



ODE TO A MULE

[Major Charles W. Allen was editor of the *Chadron Democrat*. He used regularly to demolish the writer with his logic and invective. The only possible revenge was to print verses in my own paper with his name as author. As he was an ardent, unreasonable democrat this verse seemed peculiarly his own. It is still preserved in scrap books of Mr. Allen's friends as a fine example of sound democratic writing.]

O modest mule! On thee I dote.
Thy mild and melancholy note

ODE TO A MULE

Is sweeter far than fife or drum
Upon my raptured tympanum,
Thy naive, unstudied, mulish grace
Here in my heart has found thee place
Dear border tough.

All hail! Most royal mule. Thy mug
Is pleasant as an uncorked jug
Unto my eyes. Let other poets praise
The camp, the court; if my poor lays
But imitate thy soulful brays
It is enough.

Thrice hail! my fellow democrat,
To thee I doff my Cleveland hat.
Thou slow to drive and hard to lead—
Type of the true Jacksonian breed;
Let envious ballet-girls turn sick,
Thy robust limbs and lofty kick
Proclaim thee master of that art;
Dear Democratic counterpart
This is no bluff!

ODE TO A MULE



MARCO MAJOR ALLEN

MARCO MAJOR ALLEN

A STORY OF THE CHADRON CITY ELECTIONS.

At midnight, on his Gumbo claim,
The Major dreamed of that bright hour,
When he could toot the trump of fame
And twist the caudal end of power;
In dreams on Empyrean wings
He soared above these sordid things—
Above pay ads and legals too,
Job work and back subscriptions due—
Above the trials small and great,
Which form the editor's estate—
He trod the nation's quarter-deck,
Gave to the rope his rival's neck;
Councils and mayors and police
Spoke at his beck or held their peace—
Cooley no more his thoughts might vex,
Egan or Carley no more perplex,
In that bright realm his vision saw
His word was edict, his nod was law.

At midnight in the beer saloon,
Tom Coffey, Cook and Owens Jim,
Caucussed in darkness' silent noon,
And fixed the slate in fighting trim,
At midnight, while the major snored,
This plotting trio, wide awake,
Set up the pins on which he floored
And named the dose which he would take.



NEW MOTHER GOOSE

The days passed on—the major woke—
From that bright dream—too bright to last—
He woke at Sancho Panza's shriek;
"We're lost, we're lost! They've made a sneak,"
He woke and looked about dismayed,
Coffey and Co., on dress parade,
He woke and rushing forth to Hughes
Poured in his ears the direful news,
Bade Fisher haste and get his gun,
Sent telegrams to Dorrington,
Buckled his armor on and drew
His sword—and then the—sponge he threw.

Quarrels in camp have curious ends,
Particularly between "friends."

NEW MOTHER GOOSE

[The following contributions were shoved under our office door one night this week scrawled in a disguised fist and signed "Mother Goose, more to follow." We are sorry our friend, Will Hayward, persists in trying to conceal his identity.—Chadron Signal.]

Little Billy the Bear
Sat up in his lair
Munching at Cleveland pie;
He stuck in his thumb
For the postoffice plum
And got it—in a pig's eye.

NEW MOTHER GOOSE

John W. Smith was a farmer bold,
With his tall silk hat and his chain of gold,
And the way John had of making hay
Was to mow his grass with an A. P. A.

"Old woman, old woman, whither so high?"
"To sweep the cobwebs, child, off from the sky."
"Pray let us have a broom apiece
For Mrs. Powers and Dr. Leas."

I wouldn't be a butcher man
Like George or Charley Klingaman—
He kills the little calves and sheep
An' piles 'em all in a heap,—
An' papa says the tails and feet
He chops up into sausage meat
'N sometimes little dogs 'n cats
Goes in along wiv long-tailed rats—
It's bad to be a butcher man
'N have 'em call you Klingaman.

THAT GOOD COUNTRY

It was always just a little further on—across the lake—beyond the river—over the mountains—a little further on. There the rain always falls just right; the late frost never comes; the soil is better and deeper than it is here; the crops never fail. The hay land, the plow land and the timber lie alongside in the same quarter section in that country; running water is everywhere; the chinch bug and the cut-worm have never been seen over there; there are no cold winters and cattle eat root-cured hay on the hillsides the year round; the hail and cyclone storms pass by that favored region.

How many times we have heard of it! Since we left the home of our childhood how many long pulls we have made trying to get to that country! Sometimes we thought we had found it. The country was new, the soil was deep, the wild fruits were so abundant we almost forgot the old orchards; the winter was a reprint of autumn; the early and latter rains fell; never had we seen such potatoes, Georgia never shipped such watermelons, the sod corn that had never known cultivation filled our pole cribs with the abundance of Egypt; the native grass was better than timothy—what wonderful stories we wrote back to the friends at the old home.

THAT GOOD COUNTRY

we recall even now the inspiration of a new, unsettled country, the strange plants, the queer new settlers from all points of the compass, the novelty and delight there were in rough cabins and soddy gardens?

But some way it wouldn't last. The drouth came. (Strange that drouth never comes the first season a country is settled.) The chinch bug came as though telegraphed for. The potatoes grew small and the sod corn was cut up for fodder. Frost came along early and got away with the sorghum and pumpkins. It snowed that winter, something that hadn't been heard of for twenty years. The cattle got thin and we lost several cows (about calving time) in the spring. Backsetting was worse than breaking and a horse died. There was a backset indeed. We began to feel as though this wasn't the country after all. If only that first fortunate season would return. But it didn't. Next year there was a snow storm and freeze-up in May. We had no wild plums that fall. There was a light wheat crop and corn was a failure. It was all a mistake. The good country was further on.

The man who had "Money to Loan" came along that season. He transacted business with us and we stayed another year. There couldn't be three crop failures in succession. Luck must

change if we stayed with it. Sure enough there was a good crop that year. It wasn't like the first crop that came without effort. This crop took long days of unremitting toil to secure. It took machinery. It took a great deal of planning nights. We didn't go to the Fourth of July that year, and the children felt sore over it for a whole month. We got in the crop and the threshing was done. A load was taken to market. It seemed incredible that grain worth a dollar and a quarter in the spring should go begging at forty cents in the fall. It was that way, however. The railroads charged a big rate to Chicago. India grain was selling in Liverpool at peon prices and American farmers must meet them or quit the business. Perhaps there might be a foreign war. It did seem as though those fellows over in Europe would never get through talking and begin fighting—and they didn't. The fellow who had our note in the bank did, however. He began a flank movement and the grain went for what it would bring. There wasn't any money for a new house that fall and the same old overcoat went to town with us all the winter.

It was a dead certainty this was not that good country now. It was up in Montana where they irrigated and always had sure crops and high

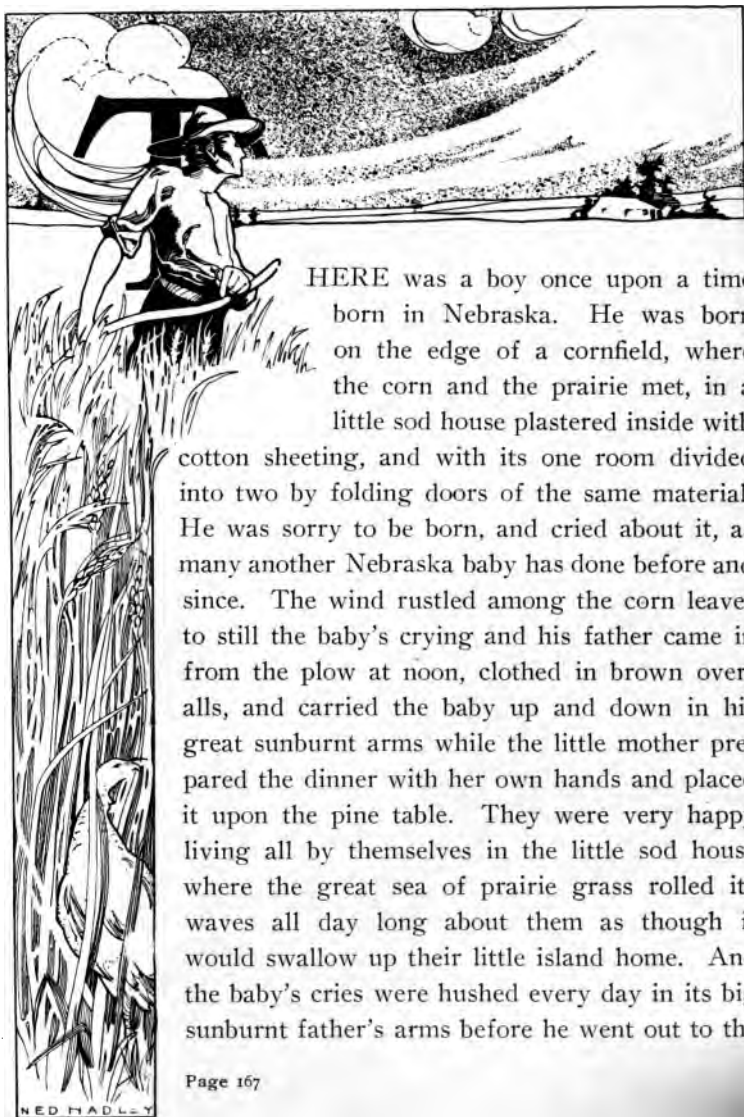
THAT GOOD COUNTRY

altitude prices. Or it was in Washington Territory where a man could work in his shirt sleeves the year round and have new potatoes on St. Patrick's day.

That good country! Shall we ever reach it? An old man who had "pioneered it" in Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa and Nebraska was conversing with the writer one day on the train. He was going to the Pacific coast. "I've tried 'em pretty nigh all around and now I'm goin' out as fur's the coast. Ef it don't suit me there I reckon I'll go to New Zealand, mebbe. They all do right fine for a spell, but they don't last. I'm a-hunting for that good country and I'm bound to find it." He was nearer finding it than he knew for he died on the train this side of Ogden.

Some of us who have been hunting "that good country" for half a lifetime begin to think when friends come back from the Pacific coast and tell us that it isn't to be found the other side of the Cascades perhaps it is just as near us here as it ever will be in this life. Perhaps we shall never know that country until the sexton's spade shall discover it for us. That good country! Where the crops never fail; where the rain falls just right; where the winters are not cold and the summers are always fine.

A TRUE WAR STORY



HERE was a boy once upon a time born in Nebraska. He was born on the edge of a cornfield, where the corn and the prairie met, in a little sod house plastered inside with cotton sheeting, and with its one room divided into two by folding doors of the same material. He was sorry to be born, and cried about it, as many another Nebraska baby has done before and since. The wind rustled among the corn leaves to still the baby's crying and his father came in from the plow at noon, clothed in brown overalls, and carried the baby up and down in his great sunburnt arms while the little mother prepared the dinner with her own hands and placed it upon the pine table. They were very happy living all by themselves in the little sod house where the great sea of prairie grass rolled its waves all day long about them as though it would swallow up their little island home. And the baby's cries were hushed every day in its big sunburnt father's arms before he went out to the

cornfield and the breaking-plow, while the little mother worked in the little island home and watched through its single window the horses' ears as they went up and down all day long through the long waves of prairie grass and the rustling corn leaves.

The prairie mice burrowed holes in the walls of the sod house and the rattlesnakes burrowed after the mice and occasionally got through onto the floor where the baby crept as he grew older, but that never harmed the baby nor daunted the little mother nor hindered the big sunburnt father from going to and fro through the rustling corn leaves and the tall prairie grass.

So the baby grew to be boy and pattered with bare feet in the paths that had been made through the tall prairie grass and played in the shade of the struggling young trees that were growing all around the sod house that now had a little frame addition in front. For playmates the boy had the grasshoppers and the ground squirrels and Old Shep, the family dog, and the calf that was picketed by a short rope near the edge of the cornfield and the great waves that rolled across where the prairie grass used to grow, but where now grew a wheat field, and the sky and the clouds and the quail that ran along the ranks of rustling corn. The boy





A TRUE WAR STORY

thought that the whole world was one great prairie with cornfields and waving grass and a clear sky and freedom everywhere. He thought so because that was the world he lived in and he had never visited any other worlds.

There came a time very shortly for him to start on a visit to other ones. It came one April morning when the little mother fastened a new straw hat to his waist by a cord and started him with a little tin pail in his hand across the sea of prairie grass and wheat fields to another little sod island a mile away. The straw hat sailed safely over the sea and found in the little island at the end of the voyage a fairy in a gingham apron and a white collar. The fairy had a wand and with the wand she pushed ajar the gateway to the other worlds. There was the world of words,—such a lot of people lived in it and you had to know them all by their faces the moment you met them. There was the world of numbers which was a very hard, exacting world to visit in—everything had to be so straight and prim and precise. And there was the world of history. Best of all the boy liked that. In it was General Washington crossing the Delaware and Napoleon upon the Alps, and Nelson breaking through the French line, and Paul Revere riding

away through the night to Concord, and General Grant at the Wilderness, and over it all a halo. Many an hour did the boy steal away from the other worlds to live in this one. Many a time did he storm the heights of Quebec with Wolfe, or charge down Lundy's lane with Scott. War and patriotism! Liberty and martial glory! Now and forever one and inseparable.

So thinking and living and dreaming the boy grew to be a youth. The clear Nebraska sky and the pure Nebraska air and the homely Nebraska corn bread and milk had done their part. He was straight and sturdy and strong as one of the tall trees that threw their shadow about the spot where once stood the little sod house and the struggling young saplings. He was strong and sturdy and straight as they because like them he had grown up and out of Nebraska soil and the roots of his being struck down deep therein. The big sunburnt father and the little quiet mother and the fairy with the wand and the white collar had done their part. He was truthful and generous and loving because he had grown up in an atmosphere of kindness and love and truth. His heart throbbed with sympathy for the oppressed and suffering everywhere and the blood beat against his brain in hot indignation at the story of cruelty or selfishness or wrong. His soul



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longed for the opportunity to throw itself into the conflict for freedom and human rights. Alas! there was no such opportunity. The nation was droning along like a lazy plow-boy following the corn plow on a July afternoon. There was no bugle call to the field of glory and patriotism. There was likely to be none. There was no field for valor except the cornfield and there were no weapons for daring save the hoe and the pitchfork.

Across the brown prairie land there came one winter time a far-off cry of distress,—so far-off it seemed to be from a distant planet. The prairie land heard the cry and wished that planets were nearer to one another or that some genius had solved the problem of crossing interstellar space. The cry came nearer and blended with it the cry of one Nebraska woman's voice. Then it was silent again, but the prairie land woke up. It wasn't so far to neighboring planets after all.

And then there came a new sound. It was the sound of a bugle! At last! Not far-off now, but near at hand. It came over the hills one morning in corn planting time and blew so shrill in the boy's ear that it startled him. "Liberty and glory—war and patriotism"—it cried. "Liberty and glory—war and patriotism"—the old song



“Many an hour did the boy steal away from the other worlds to live
in this one.”

that had slumbered so long in the boy's bosom. After that there was no music in the blackbird's senseless chatter or the patter of April rain on the dead cornstalks. "Liberty and glory—war and patriotism" at every turning in the field. The team was in the field the next day, but the sunburnt father was behind it. The boy was at the recruiting office. He passed the examination. He held up his hand and took the oath to support the constitution and obey his superior officers. He was mustered in. "Liberty and glory—war and patriotism" rang in his ears when the drill sergeant took him out in a squad just like him and chased them up and down across a muddy field, and halted and right-about-faced them and put them through the manual of arms at a rattling pace and at length turned them over to the company commander who column-righted and column-lefted them and deployed them as skirmishers and shut them up again like a lady's fan and finally sent them muddy and breathless to camp.

The boy understood that this was all preliminary to the glory and liberty and patriotism that lay beyond. He heard of schemings and wire-pullings and heart-burnings over commissions and soft places. He had none of them. He rejoiced to stand guard in the rain and sweep

the company streets and dig slop holes and do disagreeable duty. It was part of the discipline of the soldier. It was preparation for the great work further beyond. "War and patriotism—liberty and glory—one and inseparable," was the watchword that answered every challenge of doubt or distrust or suspicion on the picket line of his heart.

So then the marchings and counter marchings having been done and the commissions all made out, and the griefs all aired and the political pulls all packed away for future use, and the agents for all the different transportation lines awarded contracts, and the orders come from Washington, the regiment moved. The big sunburnt father and the little quiet mother had come down to witness the event and with them a descendant in apostolic succession of the fairy with the wand and white collar. And tears glistened in the eyes of all three like the rain drops on the prairie grass as the boy's company marched down to the train and waved its handkerchiefs and campaign hats until the windows disappeared in a cloud of dust.

The glistening tears disappeared but the cloud of dust stayed. All day and all night and another day they travelled with it, through a maze of villages and farms and forests and waving



flags and gaily dressed girls and cake and pie and sandwiches. "Liberty and glory—war and patriotism"—surely the path to them was pleasant.

The camp at last. A medley of mules and ambulances and equipage and tents. Thousands upon thousands of men and miles upon miles of tented streets. Another thousand of men and another mile of street. There was brush to chop and ground to clear and tents to put up and drains to dig. The soft clay was very different from the sandy loam of Nebraska. The hot southern rain fell in torrents and the hotter southern sun came out and cooked the decaying vegetation until, as the boy remarked, they had "steam soup" every day for dinner. "Liberty and glory—war and patriotism"—the boy kept saying every day to himself as he tramped through the mud or stood guard rainy nights and watched the ghosts of Miasma rise from the cess-pools and mouldering foliage about him.

One thing the boy began to notice now that he was a thousand miles from home that he had never thought of before—that was the difference between an officer and a private. He had never supposed there was any particular difference before—no more difference than there was between the precinct assessor and the men who elected

him to assess. Now he was suddenly made conscious in direct intrusive ways that there was a very great difference—one that he was constantly reminded of for fear he might forget it. It was not that the regiment was turned out on parade in the rain for the mere gratification of headquarters. It was not that they had better food there than in the company's mess. The boy cared for neither of these things. It was despotism and class distinction. The boy was born into the world of freedom and fraternity. He had enlisted to fight in their cause. He was willing to obey orders, to endure hardships, but he was not prepared to pay homage to any one but Almighty God. And somehow, percolating from division headquarters all the way down to the tent at the head of the company street was the idea of worship of shoulder straps.

The hot days of summer grew hotter and sickness stalked into camp. The water was unfit to drink. The seepage and sewerage of fifty thousand men soaked the soil and steamed up beneath the summer sun. The parades and grand reviews went on although some of the men were grown so weak they could not stand in line. The food grew poor in quality and the hospitals were so overcrowded that the sick were uncared for in them. Out in the mountains the water was





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clear and the air was pure. The boy used to think sometimes it was strange that the regiment was not moved out there. Then he reflected that being only a private, he was not expected to think. "Liberty and glory—war and patriotism"—he wondered whether he was serving them. Not being entitled to talk he could only wonder and go on doing duty and digging water closet vaults and watching his company drop away until there were scarcely enough of them well to stand guard duty.

He felt like dropping out himself, but clear grit and fear of the hospital held him up until the news came first of the great victories and then of peace. Then wornout nature tired of mounting guard and the enemy rushed in. "A bad case of typhoid," said the doctor, as he was taken to the hospital. Then in his delirium a new light broke upon his mind. It was no longer "war and patriotism" that he murmured as he tossed in fever. He seemed at last to see war in its true nature—a destroying despotism crushing out all the nobler sentiments of the human heart. A waste of human life and energy—a breeder of selfishness—a companion of corruption and jobbery—a nightmare of intrigue and folly and crime. In his fever he saw the graves of his comrades who died in fevered camps, he saw the millions of

money wasted in transportation contracts, in purchases of ships, in useless bombardments, and with these he saw the home on the prairie where careful economy had ruled since he was born. He saw the district school house whose doors were open only four or five months in the year because the money would keep them open no longer.

He saw all these and knew even in his fever that out of their economy and self-denial must be paid all the waste and extravagance of war. No wonder he called "peace—home—mother" continually with burning lips.

And they came. The little quiet mother from the far-off Nebraska home who had not been out of the state since he was born, was there in the hospital, at his side, with food, and nursing, and love that knew no obstacles.

Home again. Back from the hospital and fever camp.

Back to God's country—where the air is pure and the water is clear, and the corn leaves rustle and the big sunburnt father can lift him and carry him into the house as he used to carry the baby at the noon time so many years ago. Where the fairy with the white collar stands waiting with swimming eyes and outstretched hand; back to life, and home, and hope. And

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never more to repeat "liberty and glory—war and patriotism—one and inseparable," but always so long as life shall last, "freedom, brotherhood, peace."





A Bunch of Indian Cowboys, Sioux Reservation, 1903.

DWELLERS IN THE BIG BAD LANDS

The first time I saw him he was leaning against the heavy log bars of the horse corral, keeping back the bunch of wild range horses, while the rest of the outfit were inside roping the necessary steeds for a long ride across the bad lands. With curious concentration he was watching the evolutions of the maddened animals as they rushed with thundering hoof beats from one side of the corral to the other, dodging with marvelous avoidance the skilfully thrown lasso as it flew through the air toward some intended victim's neck.

"Which one will ye have, Charley?" called out one of the men in the corral. I was not yet well enough acquainted with the outfit to know them by name.

"I'll take that there roan filly with the white stripe in her face and the white off-hind foot," answered Charley, fixing his attention with nervous intensity on the animal as she dodged in and out among her fellows trying to avoid the fatal loop which at last firmly circled her neck. The man at the bars threw his whole weight on the top log while he leaned forward to observe the struggles and writhings of the captured animal. The roan filly, with a white stripe in her face and the white off-hind leg, was brought up to the

corral entrance and the rope handed to the man who had called for her. He gently let down the bars and leading the mare through, faced her about with a steady hand and put the bars up again. Then he led the mare a few yards away where a heavy cowboy saddle, a saddle blanket, and a riding bridle were lying in a heap upon the ground. The roan made one or two snorts and plunges and I had time to note the superb muscular strength of the man who held the rope, before he began the process of saddling up. He had a deep chest, with a great column-like neck set strongly upon it, and tense, corded muscles in his arms that showed through his shirt sleeves like a braided horse-hair lariat. He held the roan strongly with his single right hand while he picked up the bridle with the left and approached her. The mare stiffened her fore legs and threw her weight backward, but was held as in a vise by the rope clenched in the strong man's right hand. Quietly the left hand approached, gave one or two short pats upon her neck, then gently rubbed her forehead, then imperceptibly slid the bridle down the left arm, then stroked the filly's nose,—then firmly thrust the bit against her teeth, into the mouth,—then quickly carried the headstall over the ears and with another movement, almost too swift to be followed by the eye,



brought the throat latch under and buckled it. The bridle was on.

The mare quivered in every knot of muscle for a final struggle against the next part of the ceremony which she had learned to dread,—placing the heavy cowboy's saddle upon her back and cinching the wicked girth until it was so tight no bucking or plunging could loosen it. The young man, still strongly grasping the rope with a running noose about the horse's neck, led her a step or two forward and for the first time I observed something awkward in his movement. While the saddle blanket lay on the ground, in perfectly plain sight beneath the glance of his eyes, and within three feet of him, he groped about in two or three places where it was not before he placed his hand upon it. Shifting the rope which held the horse from his right to his left hand, he reached with his right, holding the saddle blanket, toward the mare's shoulder. With the first touch of the blanket upon her quivering flesh the roan sprang forward trying to bolt head on, but was checked and thrown back upon her haunches by the wonderful muscle in the man's left arm. Before she could recover, the saddle blanket was upon her back and the right hand was groping again,—this time for the saddle. The saddle was, of course, in plainer sight than the blanket had been

and the man's face was once or twice turned so that he must have seen it, yet it was only at the third or fourth grasp of the hand that it lit upon the pommel and carried it with a quick, easy reach to the mare's back. With a deft stroke of the fingers the stirrup and cinch were let down on the farther side and, grasping the rope with an extra contraction of the left arm muscles to hold the horse steady, the right hand went under the belly, caught the swinging girth, brought it up into place and,—after quieting two or three ineffectual leaps on the part of the filly,—passed the thick leather strap rapidly through the girth ring, doubled it across in a Texas loop, cinched it tightly,—and the roan filly with the white stripe in her forehead and the white off-hind foot was ready to be mounted.

A moment later the lasso noose was loosened and slipped over the horse's head, thrown to the ground, and grasping the loose bridle reins with his left hand he caught the stirrup with his left foot, swung himself into the saddle and, after a brief exhibition of fancy pitching and double action bucks from the roan, horse and rider went off down a ravine of broken bad lands on the gallop.

As they disappeared in a cloud of gumbo dust



I remarked to another one of the outfit who was saddling up: "Charley isn't a bad horse man."

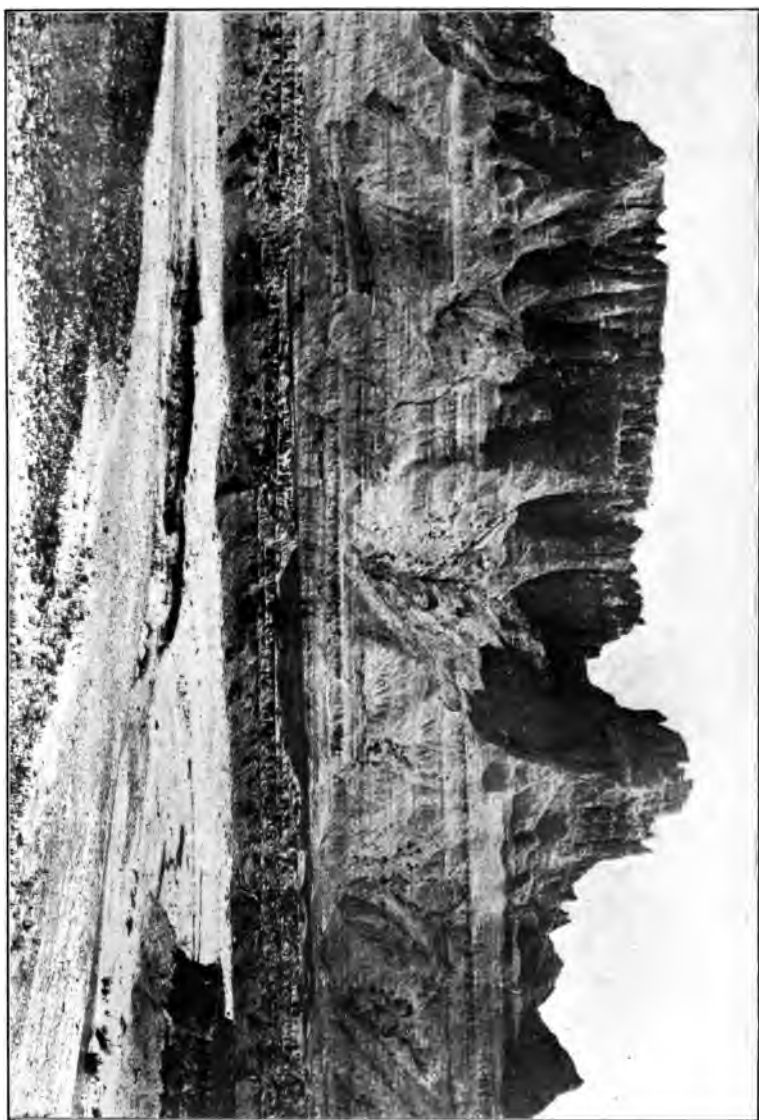
"He's fa'r fur a feller' at 's stone-blind!" was the answer.

Charles Palmier, son of a French trader, and a Sioux Indian mother, was, when I first met him at his home, on the Palmier ranch, in the heart of the bad lands of the great Sioux reservation, South Dakota, a young man about twenty-two years of age. He had been stricken with a disease of the eyes,—common enough trouble in Indian camps where sanitary measures are neglected. The frontier "medicine man," a white doctor, to whom the child was taken, administered a series of strong eye washes which utterly destroyed the sight and left him before his seventh birthday "stone-blind," as it was sympathetically phrased by his cowboy associates.

Life anywhere to a man stricken blind must have a vast void of unknown darkness. Life to a plains Indian boy stricken blind before he had learned to read should be a succession of unknown voids. The clear sunlit atmosphere through which the eye pierces a hundred miles to find some familiar peak or bad land butte as a guide in travel must be a torment to a blind man who feels its touch upon his cheek, but cannot fathom its lucid depths.

The country about Charles Palmier's boyhood home is one of the wildest and most romantic of any part of North America. A hundred miles away from any railroad the White river valley, South Dakota, winds through a succession of bad land basins, where the earth's surface is not merely gashed, ridged and broken as in rough country farther east,—but is carved and scrolled and sculptured in a thousand fantastic forms that no imagination ever dreamed; now rising in a shape of great white stone walls, with portholes and strange beings peering through them,—now towering in castles and turrets with spires and pinnacles piled one above another for a thousand feet; now scooped out into some gigantic abyss into whose dizzy depths the mountain sheep can hardly find its way to crop the sweet grass that sparsely grows in its deeper shadows. Scattered all over the land like this are gullies, deep, narrow crevices, masses of debris,—the ruins of some fallen bad lands tower,—and here and there patches of grass and sage brush which makes the native pasture for horses, cattle and mountain sheep. Roads and cowpaths in this region are so long and crooked they seem modeled on the horns of a Texas steer and of Rocky Mountain sheep. Along the edge of precipices they go with sudden, sharp, absurd lit-





Sheep Mountain, South Dakota.

tle turns that almost throw you out of your saddle,—then plunge headlong down into a sunken valley, then double in and out through a labyrinth of ruined pillars of some ancient fortress, then trail the long spur of some far winding ridge to scale its summit.

In such a land as this Charles Palmier, the French-Indian boy, found himself blind at seven years of age. How should a blind child learn to live in a land where a man needs the full use of his eyesight to escape death every hundred yards? Charles Palmier has answered that question. I cannot here relate the process. It is doubtful even if he could do it. I will speak only of results:

One day when Charles was about fifteen years old, a stranger riding through the bad lands saw him playing with his dog on the edge of a steep gully near the ranch and inquired the way to Wounded Knee.

"You see that old cottonwood down the canyon?" said Charles. "The road forks there; take the right hand fork and follow until you come out on top of the ridge just this side of that high twin butte, leave the main travelled road there and bear to the right on a dim trail along the edge of the ravine until you come to a bunch of elm trees in a little pocket. Go down the slope



The Corn Creek Camp, Sioux Reservation, June, 1903.

to the left of the elm trees and you will come into the main road, leading southwest to Wounded Knee."

At a ranch a few miles farther on the traveller told them that he had been directed by an Indian boy near Palmier's ranch who showed a remarkably intimate knowledge of the country, every prominent feature of the route having been correctly described by him. When told that the Indian boy was "as blind as a butte rock" he refused to believe it and no amount of argument or explanation could persuade him that a boy who could "see" cottonwood trees, white rock pillars and bad land ridges miles away was blind.

Baptiste Pourier, one of the most noted scouts of General Crook during the long years of war with the Sioux, lives on the Medicine Root Creek, about forty miles from the Palmier ranch. Riding the bad lands one day in search of some stray stock he came to Palmier's. Charley was sitting out in front of the corral repairing a quirt. It had been about ten years since "Big Bat" had spoken with Charley. He thought he would test the boy's memory and called out to him in a voice changed as much as possible, "Hello, Charley." The blind boy straightened himself up and responded without a moment's hesitation, "Hello, there, Mr. Pourier."



What memories of summer twilight hours, when the tallest turrets of bad land castle towers burned crimson with the parting benediction of a sun already sunk below the horizon; when the outfit had unsaddled from a hard day's riding and sat around the ranch yard smoking cigarettes and discussing the trivial trail incidents of the day! What memories of twilight hours flooded with the melody of old time ballads,—“Annie Laurie,” “Old Kentucky Home,” “Nellie Gray,” “Old Black Joe,” “Ben Bolt,”—with the rich accompaniment of Charley's violin or guitar and the deep diapason of his bass voice joining in the refrain. Music,—the one language understood by ignorant and educated, by savage and citizen,—had become the passion of the blind boy's life since the light of the visible world had been shut from his sight. The stray traveller who brought a new melody to the bad lands was more to the Palmier Ranch than the Greek bearing golden gifts.

Still another memory of those days. It was Christmas week, 1902. Charley had been over visiting at the Jones ranch, about three miles distant, headquarters for a family of noted mountain sheep hunters and for frontier good cheer. A little after noon he mounted his favorite cowhorse, “Tex,” and started for home. Instead of

taking the main travelled road down the canyon he chose a shorter one, little used, which led over a high ridge and along the edge of a canyon precipice about one hundred feet in height. A fierce snow storm was coming on from the northwest and in the pure animal delight that such an atmospheric change develops in both boy and beast, Charley, after galloping Tex up to the top of the ridge, dismounted and walked along the old road kicking pebbles in front of him until he could hear them rattle at the bottom of the canyon bed far below. At the sound another vagrant thought took possession of his mind,—to walk to the edge of the precipice and, kicking heavy clods loose, listen to their thunder on the ice of the creek bed at the bottom. He repeated this several times and each time the roar of the mass of gravel and boulder filled his soul with a wild joy that only human hearts can know who love the wilderness solitude. He stamped the canyon's verge again to send down one final avalanche of thunder. The edge was undermined and quick as a flash his footing melted into falling fragments, the bridle reins which were lying loosely over one arm fell away before he could grip them, and, feet foremost, he shot over the precipice—eighty feet—to the ice below.



It was about two o'clock in the afternoon when he went over the edge. When he became conscious again it was some time in the night. He could not tell the hour, but his senses had always distinguished day from darkness. It was dark and very cold. The force of his fall had broken through the ice into the water of the little stream beneath and the water was now freezing. It was the freezing sensation that restored him to the battle for life. He reached out with his right arm. A sharp pain stopped him. His arm was broken at the wrist. He tried to lift his leg and found that it was broken below the knee. There was time to think and Charley thought hard. He knew that Tex had gone home, and was now sheltering himself on the lee side of the ranch corral. But there was no one at the ranch to take note of the riderless horse. Everyone there had been gone away for a week leaving the blind boy to run the ranch alone. He knew that no one would miss him for several days either at his own ranch or at the neighbors'. The freezing sensation grew sharper. He must get out of the creek bed or he would freeze to death before morning. With a painful, mighty muscular effort he threw his weight on his elbows and dragged his body out of the water hole. His familiarity with every

feature of the landscape now stood by him in this moment of crisis. The map of the canyon spread out before his visionless eye. About four rods from the creek bed opposite the cliff where he had fallen was a wild plum thicket with two or three cottonwood trees and some fallen underbrush. Like all Indians he was an inveterate cigarette smoker and in his pocket was a bunch of matches. The only chance he had to escape freezing was to reach that plum thicket and make a fire that would keep him warm till morning. He dragged himself up the opposite slope and out to the plum thicket. He was encouraged by the presence of his favorite dog which had found its way to the canyon bed, remained with him during his entire period of unconsciousness and now, delighted at the turn affairs had taken, ran to and fro about him, licking his broken arm and stimulating his brain and heart to stronger resolutions.

The plum thicket was there all right, the familiar cottonwood trees were there, the dead log and underbrush,—the blind boy had not lost his bearings nor his local geography for a moment. He gathered with his sound hand a little pile of dry cottonwood leaves and inner bark. The skill which enables the cowboy to light a cigarette on horse-back in the face of the fiercest





Charley Palmier's cliff and his horse "Tex."

gale with hardly the waste of a match made it an easy task for him to start his fire. He groped about breaking dry brush with his sound hand and piling it upon the fire until he had a strong blaze. Then gathering a supply of reserve fuel to keep the fire going he hugged it as closely as he could until his frozen clothing was thawed out and began to dry. According to the best of his reckoning it was somewhere between ten and twelve o'clock when he awoke to consciousness. It was a long night with his crushed arm and his fractured leg, but the necessity of breaking brush in order to keep the fire going helped to shorten it, and the unmistakable sympathy of the dog as he crept close to his crippled master with mute manifestations of tender anxiety gave a sense of companionship. By the time daylight came he had his clothing dry and began to consider his future prospects in life.

If he stayed where he was he might not be missed for a week, in which time he would starve or freeze to death. About twenty rods away on the other side of the canyon bed was the road ordinarily travelled by the Indians and ranchmen in that part of the country. In the winter time travel is only occasional, for in cold weather the average Indian family hugs the fireplace, and



the cowboys ride the range merely to look out for stock which may be in distress. To leave his warm fire and drag himself through the grass and brush to the canyon road was not cheerful to think upon, but it was his only chance. Charley has no idea how long it took him to reach the road, but, as his track afterward showed, he steered nearly a straight course to his destination. It was a comfort at last to feel the print of horses' hoofs and the track of wagon tires in the yellow canyon clay and to hope that where some had travelled others would surely travel soon.

All day he waited. Late in the afternoon he thought he heard the rattle of a wagon far down the canyon. He listened and heard—what ears so often hear as they strain to catch a longed-for note—silence. Silence for so long a time that he abandoned hope. Then again, he thought he heard the rattle of a wagon just as though it were coming down the hill and striking the frozen pebbles of the water course. Then again a silence,—but not so long. Then full and firm—the rattling treble of the wagon axles followed by the heavy bass thump, thump, of horses' feet. Then, presently, the full chorus of axle and hoofbeat and rattling boards and

snorting horses and the wagon stopped a few yards from the boy and his dog.

The driver was a squaw, alone, and the next difficulty encountered was how to get the cripple into the wagon. He had grown so stiff from his wounds and the cold that he was unable to climb in and the squaw was not strong enough to lift a hundred and seventy-five pounds of Indian and load it into a wagon. The matter was finally solved by taking out the wagon endgate and laying some poles so as to form an inclined plane up which Charley was painfully dragged, rolled and shoved until he was loaded very much like a prize animal for the stock show. There was then the drive to the nearest ranch where surprise and sympathy were both quickly hushed in the face of the immediate necessity of getting the blind boy to a competent surgeon. He was placed immediately in a spring wagon and started on the long drive to Pine Ridge Agency. Eighty miles of bad lands, and mountain sides and mountain torrents,—over breakneck jumpoffs and side hill hogbacks, before the brick walls of the United States hospital rose like a red beacon of hope in the valley of the White Clay and the surgeon's hand could deal with the problem of a blind Indian with two broken limbs.

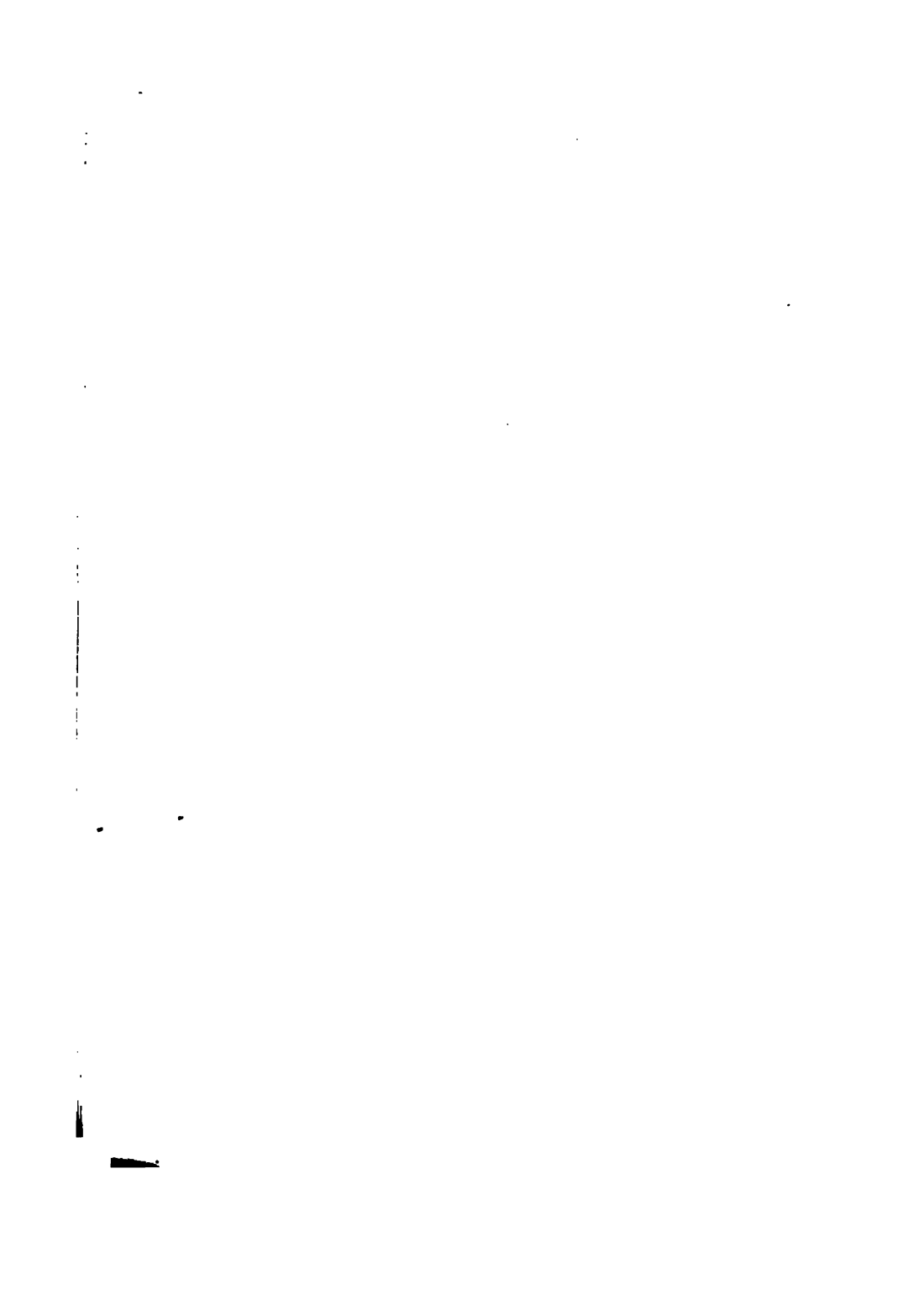
Three months later, when the grass in the bad



DWELLERS IN THE BIG BAD LANDS

lands valleys around the Palmier ranch was just shooting so that the ponies could get their bite of verdure, Charles Palmier saddled up "Tex" at the old corral and rode over the familiar canyon road to the Jones ranch,—pausing to examine the little plum thicket and the bed of ashes which had saved his life the December before.







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